

Disease of the Soul and Spirit

Why and How Does Our Soul Get Sick?

H1 Disease of the Soul and Spirit: What Is Their Relevance to the Heart?

In a universe governed by mathematical principles, there must be a precise definition for disease. Since disease is understood as the absence of health, we need a clear definition of health to understand disease. The mathematics that governs the universe also applies to our soul and body. We consider our body healthy when all its measurements and quantities are in harmony and balance. The absence of this health, or in other words, disease, usually manifests itself as pain, weakness, dysfunction, or distress, causing us trouble. Disease is something we often try to avoid, and there is no difference between our soul and body in this regard.

Just as we need a healthy body to live in the world and use its resources, we also need a healthy heart in our journey toward the hereafter. Therefore, not only must we know the factors that lead to a healthy heart, but we must also correctly identify the causes and symptoms of disease. Maintaining health is impossible without avoiding the causes of illness. We usually detect illness in our bodies when they lose their normal or optimal functioning. However, this condition is not limited to our physical bodies; a sick soul also lacks the necessary vitality and is often deprived of happiness, peace, and kindness. The disease of the soul and spirit prevents us from enjoying life and the various blessings bestowed upon us, leading us to sour our own lives and those of others through excuses, stubbornness, and irritability.

In this lesson, we aim to explore the nature of disease, its causes, symptoms, the definition of a sick person, and the necessity of healing the disease of the soul and spirit.

Why Do We Get Sick?

Sometimes, we experience conditions in our bodies that result from our carelessness or excess in addressing a particular need. For example, overeating can lead to stomach pain, or insufficient sleep can cause headaches. We may overexert ourselves, damaging our joints, or excessive phone use can harm our eyes and spine. Since we can see our bodies and are constantly in touch with them, we quickly respond to their ailments. However, our soul also requires equal attention and is vulnerable to various factors. An inappropriate image, bad company, dissonant music, or an unsuitable environment can similarly play a role in the disease of the soul and spirit.

While various factors contribute to the disease of the soul and spirit, nutrition is a factor that we can rarely ignore. Everything we see, hear, and feel serves as input for our soul, forming the raw materials from which we shape our imaginal and estimative forms, and other intellectual and supra-rational activities. If we do not take care of our eyes, ears, mouth, and other sensory faculties, we will eventually feel the results in other faculties. Negative and polluted thoughts, grudges, jealousy, and irritability do not arise spontaneously; they are formed based on what we feed our souls with. This world is structured on mathematics and principles, and what we reap is the result of our sowing. Poor nutrition not only causes illness but it also creates a lack of appetite in our supra-rational dimension, hindering us from

achieving the purpose of our creation and depriving us of happiness and inner peace. A soul that indulges excessively in lower parts fills its heart with estimative, imaginal, and sensory beloveds, leaving no room for its true Beloved; as a result, it loses balance and becomes sick.

The Necessity of Healing Diseases

When illness strikes, it disrupts our balance and impedes our natural functioning to the extent we are affected. It is rare to find a sensible person who ignores his illness without taking action to cure it. If we are not indifferent to the diseases of the plants and animals around us, how can we easily overlook the disease of the soul and spirit? We quickly identify problems with our stomachs, intestines, joints, and bones, seeking specialists for each, yet few recognize grudges, jealousy, ingratitude, or a hardened heart as illness worthy of seeking treatment. While we may only deal with a sick body during our lifetime, the disease of the soul and spirit not only destroys our inner peace and happiness in this world but it also ruins our eternity.

We can only expect someone to diagnose the disease of his heart if he first knows his heart and the various dimensions of his soul. Naturally, when we lack awareness and knowledge of something, we cannot comment on its health or take appropriate action to correct its flaws. For example, we do not expect someone unfamiliar with cars to diagnose their faults. Thus, to identify and address the diseases of the heart, we need to know our true self and the dimensions of our existence. Otherwise, we face a sad and restless life.

Criteria for Diagnosing the Disease

Usually, the first step in treating a disease is diagnosing it, but we must have a standard for health or a criterion for being sick. In this way, distancing ourselves from health standards or approaching harmful factors can serve as a warning of impending illness. Therefore, mirrors are provided to help us diagnose the disease of the soul and spirit, so that we can address them as soon as they are detected. One such mirror is the Quran. In verse twenty-four of *Surah At-Tawbah*, God clearly states the conditions of the disease of the soul and spirit as well as our departure from balance. A heart that prioritizes home, family, business, and so on over God, the *Ahl al-Bayt* (Prophet's family), and *jihad* (striving in God's way) has deviated from balance; such a heart, due to incorrect arrangement of priorities, is no longer healthy and is easily trapped by Satan.

A sound heart is only the abode of our main Beloved, Allah, and easily connects with the Unseen realm. However, the more our heart is filled with the beloveds of lower parts, the more it faces difficulty in connecting with its main Beloved. The problems that disrupt its health, depending on their degree and intensity, make our heart sick. Just as we need to tune a radio to receive the correct frequencies, how can we expect a heart that has lost its balance to connect with Allah or its manifestations?

In this lesson, we defined the disease of the soul and spirit. We noted that we become ill when we neglect the nourishment of our faculties and cause our heart to become unbalanced. An imbalanced heart easily falls into the traps of Satan and loses the ability to connect with the Unseen realm. While physical illness confines us to this world, the disease of the soul and spirit ensnares us for eternity. However,

God has provided us with criteria to assess the health or the disease of the soul and spirit.

How strongly do you believe in the necessity of knowing the disease of the soul and spirit? Share your thoughts with us.

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