

Knowing The Signs Of A Healthy Heart

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آهله وصحبه أجمعين

“Knowing the Signs of a Healthy Heart at the Approach of Ramaḍān.”

-The greatest affair that a Muslim should give attention to is the health and condition of his heart regarding what Allāh (سبحانه و تعالى) has commanded and prohibited, as well as what Allāh loves and detests.

- The Muslim should focus on rectification and maintenance of his heart as this is of paramount importance to his success on Yawm al-Qiyāma.

- Allah says about His description of Yawm al-Qiyāma,

﴿يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ إِلَّا مَنْ آتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ﴾

“The day when wealth nor sons will avail; Except him who brings to Allah a clean heart.”

[Sūrah Ash- Shu`ara' 26:88-89]

The healthy heart should be free from the following defects:

-Shaykh As-Saḍī (رحمه الله) mentions a few points that are necessary in order for the heart to be healthy. The healthy heart should be:

1. Free from shirk.
2. Free from shak (doubt).
3. Free from loving evil and vile things.
4. Free from persistence and insistence of Bid'ah (Innovations) and disobedience.

-In addition to this, the healthy heart should be filled with the opposite, mainly:

1. Ikh̄lās -Sincerity.
2. ʿIlm Knowledge.
3. Yaqīn – Certainty.
4. Love of good. He should beautify this goodness in his heart.
5. His inclinations and intentions should follow that which Allāh loves.

-The healthy heart should be free from **Shubuhāt** (doubts) with regards to ʿAqīdah and other doubtful matters, and **Shahawāt** (desires of the soul).

- The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Verily, in the body is a piece of flesh which, if sound, the entire body is sound, and if corrupt, the entire body is corrupt. Truly, it is the heart.”

- Shaykh ʿUthaymīn (رحمه الله) said, “It is obligatory that the person gives attention to the heart more than the limbs.”

-The Muslim should pay attention to the health of his heart more so than the actions of his limbs because the heart, if it is healthy, will reflect in his actions and vice versa.

- Also, the heart is what the person will be tested with regards to Yawm al-Qiyāma. Allāh says,

﴿أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٩﴾ وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

“Knows he not that when the contents of the graves are brought out and poured forth; And that which is in the breasts shall be made known.”

[Sūrah Al-Adiyat; 100:9-10]

Allāh also says,

﴿يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ ﴿٩﴾﴾

“The day when all the secrets will be examined.”

[Sūrah At-Tariq; 86:9]

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Verily, Allah does not look at your appearance or wealth, but rather He looks at your hearts and actions.”

-Shaykh ʾIthaymīn (رحمه الله) advises, “Purify your heart from shirk, bidʿah, animosity and hatred towards the Muslims and characteristics that are in opposition the Sharīʿah as the heart is the foundation.£

- Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to supplicate and say, “Oh Allāh, Changer of the hearts, keep my heart firm on your religion.”

- He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would also say, “Oh Allāh give my soul its taqwá.” And he would point to his heart and say, “taqwá is here.”

- He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would also say, “O Allāh grant my soul Taqwá and purify it. You are the best of those who purify it.”

- If he used to make the above supplications and he was forgiven for his sins, then we are more in need of this supplication.

- Allāh (سبحانه و تعالی) has said, “Fasting has been made obligatory on you just as it was obligatory on those before you so that you can gain taqwá.”

- Ramaḍān is an opportunity for us to cultivate this taqwá by reading Qurʾān daily, standing in the night prayer and making duʿā.

- Ibnul Qayyim (رحمه الله) said in his book “*Ighāthat al-Laḥfān min Masayyid al-Shayṭān*” that there are indicators and sign that we can use to gage and investigate the condition of our hearts in regards to what Allāh (عز وجل) has commanded and prohibited.

Where do we stand in regard to these signs?

- It is incumbent that we use these signs to ask ourselves, “Where do we stand in relation to these signs?”

- According to these indicators, are you from those people whose hearts are healthy?

-Or are you from those people whose hearts are sick? If so, Ramaḍān is an opportunity to rectify your situation.

- Ibnul Qayyim (رحمه الله) speaks extensively about the reasons for the health and corruption of the heart.
- Shaykh Sulaymān bin Saḥmān (رحمه الله) wrote some poetry based on the above-mentioned book by Ibnul Qayyim.
- The first thing that should be present for the heart to be healthy and during acts of worship is Tawḥīd because acts of worship will not be accepted without Tawḥīd and being upon the correct Aqīdah of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.
- Not only is Tawḥīd a requirement for a healthy heart, but it is the best thing for rectifying the hearts.
- A deviant and misguided Aqīdah is one of the greatest indicators of an unhealthy heart and shirk indicates that the heart is actually dead.
- Tawḥīd is the call of all the Prophets and Messengers (عَلَيْهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ)

- Ibnul Qayyim mentioned 6 indicators that must be apparent during acts of worship:

1. Constant remembrance of Allāh (عز وجل). The individual should increase in the Dhikr of Allāh.

- Dhikr is loosely translated to mean various things including: remembrance of Allāh, reading Qur'ān, saying tasbīḥ and takbīr as well as attending gatherings of knowledge.
- From the signs of a healthy heart is that the individual does not get exhausted nor fed-up with remembering Allāh as Allāh says in His noble Book,

﴿أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ﴾

“Is it not with the remembrance of Allāh that hearts find tranquillity” [Sūrah Ar-Ra'ḍ 13:28]

- The believer finds comfort in remembering Allāh and in acts of worship.
- Allāh will remember us if we remember Him (عز وجل). Allāh says,

﴿فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرْكُمْ﴾

“Remember Me and I will remember you.”

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:152]

-The prophet used to remember Allāh in every condition. He used to seek forgiveness more than 70 times a day, far less for us.

2. An individual experiences sadness if he misses out on his **Wird.** These are his daily specified supererogatory actions, like reading a portion of Qur’ān, praying the sunnah ṣalāt etc.

- Ibnul Qayyim says, “if the believer misses his wird, he feels more pain than a businessman that has lost his money.”
- For the one who is keen on seeking the pleasure of Allāh, how does he feel when he misses out on something that Allāh loves or has commanded? Look at your heart when you miss the prayer? If you feel sad, that’s a good sign. If you disregard it, this is a red flag and you need to reevaluate your heart.
- Some people miss the obligatory acts of worship and disregard them. The healthy heart feels pain when these things pass him by?

3. The person is very keen and miserly in regards to how he spends his time.

- He should maximize his time according to what will bring him closer to Allāh (عز وجل).
- The Muslim should be miserly with his time just like the miserly businessman is with his money.
- How much time do we waste on social media and other things that will not bring us closer to Allāh or benefit us in our religion?
- A person can memorize a page of Qur’ān in 30 minutes, and he gets 10 rewards for reading a single letter of Qur’ān.
- The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, **“Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your riches before your poverty, your free time before your work, and your life before your death.”**
- In a similar narration, he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, **“The feet of the son of Adam shall not move from before his Lord on the Day of Judgement, until he is asked about five things: about his life and what he did with it, about his youth and what he wore it out in, about his wealth and how he earned it and spent it upon, and what he did with what he knew.”**

A person will be asked about his life as well as his youth and what he did with it. This is a reminder that Allāh is going to question us about our time.

- In Ramaḍān we should make the intention to make maximum use of our time and extend this outside of Ramaḍān.
- -Yaḥyah ibn Muʿadh (رحمه الله) said, “Wasting time is more severe than death.”
- Al- Ḥassan al Baṣrī (رحمه الله) said, “I have met people who were more protective over their time in a manner that was more severe than the people of the dunya are keen to protect their wealth.”

4. The individual’s main concern should be attaining the Pleasure of Allāh (عز وجل).

- He should be keen to implement what Allāh has commanded and refrain from what Allāh has prohibited especially the greatest prohibition which is shirk.

5. The individual’s worries related to the dunya leave him when he enters the Ṣalāh.

- The believer finds it difficult to leave the Ṣalāh because he finds relief, bliss, the coolness of his eyes and the happiness of his heart in the Ṣalāh. How many of us feel this in our Ṣalāh? That it is the comfort of our hearts and that we leave all concerns for the dunya?
- Allāh says about the believers;

﴿الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ﴾

“Those who offer their Ṣalāh (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.”

[Sūrah al-Mu’min ūn: 23:2]

- The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “**Verily, a man may return from his prayer and nothing good is written for him but a tenth of his prayer, or a ninth, or an eighth, or a seventh, or a sixth, or a fifth, or a fourth, or a third, or a half.**”
- Some people only get a fraction of the reward because their minds are distracted in the prayer. The first thing we will be questioned about is the prayer.
- If the individual is negligent in the prayer, he will be more negligent in other affairs. Gage yourself, where do you stand in regards to the prayer?

- Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to say to Bilāl (رضي الله عنه), **☪️Calm us with the prayer.** & Shaykh Fawzān (حفظه الله) stated in his explanation of this that when the prophet entered the Ṣalāh, he would experience calmness from the worldly life.
 - The prayer is not a habit like clockwork or merely copying the actions of those around him, rather it is the most important thing.
 - Recognize the greatness of the prayer and its status in the religion. Gage the condition of your heart by gaging the condition of your prayer.
- 1. The individual should pay attention to the correctness of his statements, actions and intentions.** He should seek to make all the above correct upon ikhlāṣ, seeking to please Allāh.

6 Things that must be observed when a person engages in an act of worship:

1. **Ikhlāṣ**: Sincerity to Allāh (سبحانه و تعالى).
2. **Ṣidq and Nuṣḥ**: Truthfulness in his affairs of worship seeking to get closer to Allāh (عز وجل)
3. **Al-Mutābaʿh al-iqtida'**: Following the example of the prophet Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in acts of worship.

- This is one of conditions for an action to be accepted. In the famous ḥadīth of ʿĀ'ishah, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said about this, **“Whoever performs a deed that is not in accordance with our matter, it will be rejected.”**

- Regarding the statement of Allāh,

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴾

“Allāh has created death and life, so that He may test which of you is best in actions.”

[Sūrah al-Mulk: 67:2]

- Fuḍayl Ibn Iyād was asked what are the best actions, to which he replied, “If the person is sincere to please Allāh but is not following the sunnah of Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

(عليه وسلم) it will not be accepted. Likewise if he did an action following the sunnah of Muḥammad but he is not sincere then it is not accepted either. Rather the person should be sincere and follow the sunnah of the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).”

4. **Iḥsān in your acts of worship.** Worshiping Allāh as if you see Him and if you don't see Him then you know that He sees you. Murāqabat Allāh (عز وجل) being aware that Allāh sees him.
 - The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Allāh has written Ihsān upon everything.”
5. **Acknowledging the favour of Allāh upon you for enabling you to perform that act of worship.** That it is from the tawfīq of Allāh (سبحانه و تعالى). It is only because of the success of Allāh that He has blessed you to be able to do this act of worship and we should be thankful to Allāh. This gratitude entails acknowledging that the blessing is from Allāh in the first place, speaking about the blessing and using the blessing in a way that pleases Allāh. Allāh says,

﴿لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ﴾

"If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allāh), I will give you more (of My Blessings)"

[Sūrah Ibrāhīm 14:7]

6. **Taqṣīr. Falling short.** The individual recognizes that no matter how much a person strives, there will always be room for improvement and that he will still fall short and have deficiencies in his acts of worship. He recognizes that Allāh deserves far more than we could ever give Him and this makes him humble.

In summary, use this time of Ramaḍān to reflect on the condition of our hearts: What is the condition of our heart? How can I make it better? How can I use these indicators to better myself? Where does my heart stand with the things Allāh loves and hates? We should make the supplications asking Allāh (سبحانه و تعالى) to rectify our hearts.

وصل الله وسلم وبارك على نبينا محمد

