

Islam & Physical Care

Author: Al Balagh Foundation

Table of Contents

The Foundation's Word	3
Preface	4
Firstly: Providing the body with its different needs.....	8
A. Food and Drink:	8
B .Marriage:.....	9
C. Clothing and Elegance:.....	10
D. Rest and Sleep:	11
E. Physical Exercises:	12
Secondly: Preserving and Protecting the Human Body	14
1. Call for moderation:.....	14
2. Forbidding the Harmful:	15
3. Purification and Cleanliness:	15
4. Immunity and Medical Treatment:	16
Thirdly: Proper Use Of Physical Abilities	18
A Tradition puts this in a different style:.....	19
Notes.....	20

The Foundation's Word

Praise be to Allah Whose divine legislation defined the lawful and the unlawful, allowed the good things, and forbade the filthy things. Blessing and peace be upon our Master, Muhammed, who conveyed the laws and guided humanity, and upon his pure progeny and righteous companions.

The current materialistic cultures, both Eastern and Western, present the ugliest pictures of social corruption, and the cruelest stage of political despotism that man has ever experienced since the very ancient times. Though the present Super Powers take pride in their attaining a record degree of technological progress, yet the materialistic cultural concepts holding the reins of power, and standing behind this scientific progress, have deteriorated to the lowest possible degree of moral meanness and backwardness. What perfection can one expect from man dominated by vague ideas and materialistic concepts that drag him down to the level of animals in society, and cause him to aim at exterminating millions through political schemes and formidable military arsenals?

One may ask: Isn't Islam present and known in the world? So, why doesn't Islam play its role of Salvation? The answer is easy and explicit: The medicine is there, but if not used by the patient, would avail him nothing whatsoever. Nay, there are even international pressures against using this healing medicine, and the patient might even be prescribed what makes him worse. The Glorious Qur'an does away with all confusion which may befall man concerning Why do people go astray? It says that they, of their own accord, have chosen the path of Satan, kept away from the path of the Beneficent, rejected the signs of Allah, disregarded His right method and straight path, stuck to the earth, and shunned Allah's Islam. Allah, the Almighty says:

سأصرف عن آياتي الذين يتكبرون في الارض بغير الحق , وإن يروا كل آية لا يؤمنوا بها , وإن يروا سبيل الرشدا لا يتخذوه سبيلا , وإن يروا سبيل الغي يتخذوه سبيلا , ذلك بأنهم كذبوا بآياتنا وكانوا عنها غافلين الأعراف / 146

" I shall turn away from My revelation those who magnify themselves wrongfully in the earth.

And if they see every sign they will not believe in it.

And if they see the way of righteousness they do not choose it for their way,

And if they see the way of error they choose it for their way.

That is because they denied Our revelations and were heedless of them." Sura Al-A'raf 7:146

Al-Balagh Foundation, while presenting to its respected readers this study on Islam and Physical Care, as a witness to the universality of Islam, its efficiency and perfection, asks Allah the Exalted to provide us with the power enabling us to carry out His commands, perform what brings His consent and reward, and support our Jihad with clear triumph.

Allah is the Hearer, the Responder!

AI-BALAGH FOUNDATION

Preface

The body is the storehouse of man's energy, and the generator of the power of motion which participates in the fields of goodness, construction, colonization and reformation of the earth. Man can perform no work, whether religious, reformative or constructive, without the use of physical strength. The one who prays, the one who fasts, the pilgrim, the fighter, the businessman, the thinker, the merchant, the worker, the farmer, the scientist, the student, and the others, all need some physical energy to perform their roles and duties. Physical energy is the means and instrument by which man can implement his goals and aims. So, the body is the storehouse of this energy, and the generator of all movements carried out through the body's different instruments, such as hands, legs, eyes, ears, tongue, etc.. Allah the Exalted has given man his body so that he may be able to implement his aims and goals in life. It is one of Allah's blessings and creations, given to man to use it to enact the decisions of his life according to Allah's plan that defines his dealings in life, and charts out his way of living; as man's body is created in such a shape to suit the natural conditions and circumstances surrounding him:

لقد خلقنا الإنسان في أحسن تقويم

التين / 4

"Surely We created man of the best stature. " Sura Al- Tin 95:4

In order to suit the human responsibilities imposed upon him, it is a sacred duty of man to care for, and look after the physical soundness of his body duly stressed and encouraged by the Glorious Qur' an:

وأبتغ فيما آتاك الله الدار الآخرة ولا تنس نصيبك من الدنيا ... القصص / 77

"But seek the abode of the Hereafter in that which Allah hath given thee and neglect not thy portion of the world... " Sura Al - Qasas 28:77

This is for the sake of keeping man's natural system and its balance, which is to regulate nature's laws in the human body. Actually, this is to enact these laws on a harmonious balance with other laws of the natural existence around him. The body is a portent of innovation, creation and activity. To contemplate its order, its astonishing structure and the wonders of its making, expands the horizons of knowledge, of heading for Allah the Exalted and of discovering the secrets of existence, by which man would have stronger faith and would enjoy life much better.

فلينظر الإنسان مم خلق الطارق / 5 4

"So let man consider from what he is created . " Sura Al-Ta riq 86: 5

قل هو الذي أشاكم وجعل لكم السمع والابصار والأفئدة قليلاً ما تشكرون الملك / 23

"Say unto them O Mohammad: He It is Who gave you being, and hath assigned unto you ears and eyes and hearts : small thanks give ye! " Sure Al - Mulk 67:23

سريهم آساتنا في الآفاق وفي أنفسهم حتى يتبين لهم أنه الحق، أولم يكف بربك أنه على كل

شيء شهيد فصلت / 53

"We shall show them Our portents on the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth. Doth not thy Lord suffice, since He is Witness over all things?" Sura Al- Sujda 41:53

How Does Islam Handle the Body?

قال له صاحبه وهو يحاوره أكفرت بالذي خلقك من تراب ثم من نطفة ثم سواك رجلا

الكهف / 37

"And his comrade, while he disputed with him, exclaimed: Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then of a small life-germ, and then He made you a perfect man?"

Sure Al - Keht 18:37

هو أنشأكم من الارض واستعمركم فيها ... هود / 61 ...

"... He brought you into being from the earth and made you dwell in it..."
Sura Hud 11:61 5

وجعل فيها رواسي من فوقها وبارك فيها وقدر فيها أقواتها في أربعة أيام سواء للسائلين

فصلت / 10

"He placed therein firm hills rising above it, and blessed it and measured therein its sustenance in four Days, alike for all who ask." Sure Ha Mim 41:10

هو الذي جعل لكم الأرض ذلولاً فامشوا في مناكبها وكلوا من رزقه وإليه النشور الملك /

15

"He it is Who made the earth smooth for you, so walk in the paths thereof and eat of His providence. And to Him will be the resurrection of the dead." Sure Al - Mulk 67:15

يا أيها الناس كلوا مما في الأرض حلالاً طيباً ... البقرة / 168

"O Mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good in the earth..." Sure Al - Baqara 2:168

كلوا من رزق ربكم وأشكروا له ... سبأ / 15 ...

"... Eat of the provision of your Lord and render thanks to Him..." Sure Sabe'34:15

كلوا من طيبات ما رزقناكم ولا تطغوا فيه فيحل عليكم غضبي ... طه / 81

"Eat of the good things which We have provided you, and transgress not in respect to them, lest My wrath come upon you..." Sure Taha 20:81

يا بني آدم خذوا زينتكم عند كل مسجد وكلوا واشربوا ولا تسرفوا إنه لا يحب المسرفين

الاعراف / 31

"O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every time of worship, and eat and drink, but be not prodigal. surely He does not love the prodigals." Sure Al - A ref 7:31

قل من حرم زينة الله ال أخرجت لعباده والطيبات من الرزق قل ل ين آمنوا في الحياة

الدينا خالصة يوم القيامة كذلك نفصل الآيات لقوم يعلمون . الاعراف / 32

"Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good provisions? Say: These are for the believers, during the lift' of the world purely theirs on the Resurrection Day. Thus do we detail Our revelation for people who know. SuraAl-Arat 7:32

"And certainly We sent messengers to mankind before you, and We gave them wives and offspring... SuraAl-Rad 13:38

"And of His signs is this: He created for you mates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them... Sura Al - Rum 30:21

"O Children of Adam! We have sent down to you clothing to cover your shame.... " Sure Al -Araf 7:26

"And of His signs is your sleeping and seeking of His Grace by night and by day.... " Sure Al - Rum 30:23

These wonderful Qur'anic verses mentioned above reveal a number of interesting laws and concepts. Going through their meanings, connecting them together, unifying their implications, and inferring their ideological and legislative goals, we reach the following facts: A. Man, because of his physical structure and nature, is a part of the natural world: the earth being the origin of his creation, he is its son and its most advanced living being, in respect to his structure and different physical organs:

"... Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust...." Sura Al - Kahf 18:37

"... He brought you into being from the earth...." Sure Hud 11:61

B. This body which has been created of the earth, cannot by its nature, do without the provisions of the earth such as food, drink, clothes and dwelling, etc.: "We did not give them bodies that would not eat food..." Sura Al - Anbiya 21:8

C. There is a complete coordination between Man and Nature. Whatever is needed by man to sustain him is plentiful and increasingly available in the world of nature:

"...and blessed it the earth and measured therein its sustenance in four Days, alike for all who ask." Sura Ha Mim 41:10

"He It is Who made the earth smooth for you..." Sura Al - Mu/k 67:15
So, in the expanse of the earth there are provisions for all creatures in general, and for particular - paved and prepared for everybody: "...a like for a ll who ask," Sure Ha Mim 41:10

"... and measured therein its sustenance..." Sure Ha Mim 41:10

Here, in the order of creation, the equation of existence is proportionally equal between the human needs and the quantity of provision offered in nature, in perfect harmony to its balance and accuracy: "Surely! We have created every thing by measure." Sure Al - Qemar 54:49

D. Whatever amenities are there on this earth are lawful, good and permitted to all mankind, without discrimination or prejudice, since Allah's wisdom and justice ordain that every being should be provided with his requirements and shares allotted to him in life: "O Mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good in the earth..." Sura Al - Baqara 2:168

E. Man, as an individual, has been created as a biological unit with complete organs and potentialities. Man is an independent world by himself, practicing his natural relations according to this creative fact connecting him to nature from every angle. So, he has to perform his personal activity and continue his efforts in harmony with his surroundings:

"... So walk in the paths thereof..." Sure Al - Mulk 67:15

He moves here and there on the earth, interacts with nature and its energies and wealths, so as to build a connecting bridge between his body and the provisions of the earth. These natural elements take their positions inside his body, playing the role of a human energy presenting humane offerings and human efforts, different from their free and natural existence outside. Thus, these offerings appear in the shapes of thought, worship, arts and other different works, such as husbandry, life reformation, multiplication of species, etc.

In this way man interacts, through his physical nature, with nature itself, to change its stagnant materialistic energies into a humane power that flows with good ideas and vitality, and fills the world with values and means for culture and civilization. F. As man requires nourishments in order to live, he is also in need of other requirements which participate in keeping life going on, such as matrimonial relations, clothes, comfort, sleep, etc., which are regarded as the basic necessities of life, and hence to satisfy them is part of the human creation system, ordained by Allah.

Islam, as a religion, is keen on preserving life, and responds to the needs of creation. Through its teachings and laws it covers all these needs of the human nature, and organizes them:

"And of His signs is that: He created for you mates from yourselves that you may find rest in them..." Sure Al - Rum 30:21

"o children of Adam! We have sent down to you clothing to cover your shame..." Sura Al -A rat 7:26

"And of His signs is your sleeping by night and by Sura Al - Rum 30:23

In this way Islam understood man's physical requirements, legislated rules and regulations, decided on values sufficient for him, and arranged its laws and concepts revolving around three axes, each depending on the other:

1. Providing the body with its different physical needs, such as: food, drink, dwelling and clothes.
2. Preserving and protecting the human body against whatever endangers its existence.
3. Employing physical powers in their natural channels defined for them.

The above points are dealt with as below:

Firstly: Providing the body with its different needs

A. Food and Drink:

"Let man consider his food." Sura Abasa 80:24 One of Allah's great portents, wonderful procedure and blessings for man is that his natural food available on the earth, consists of two elements: The first element are the materials found in nature, such as salts, vitamins, carbohydrates, etc., available in large quantities to meet the requirement of all living beings, animals and plants.

The other element which Divine Care added to the human food to suit man's psychological and mental taste is the attraction to beauty and to its pleasure and enjoyment. He uses the pleasing, beautiful and attractive form as encouraging factors assisting him to have agreeable psychological connection with food and drink. This is of course, besides feeling the pains of hunger and thirst. Fruits, vegetables, meat, honey, suger, nuts, water, etc., all appear within an attractive beautiful frame, with a palatable, and delicious taste, offered to man on a tray of pleasing charm, and a feeling saturated with pleasure and enjoyment. There are numerous Texts and Traditions to the effect that man has full right to food and drink and to avail himself of all delicacies and amemties, provided by nature.

Imam Ja'far ibn Muiiammed Al-Sadiq A.S. ¹ said: "The body is built on bread" ²

He also said:

"Allah the Exalted has created the son of Adam hollow; so he has to have food and drink." ³ "O Allah! Bless our bread and do not make seperation between us, as without the bread we could neither fast nor pray or perform our duties towards our Lord the Almighty and most High." ⁴

The Prophet S.A⁵ is stated to have approved meat and olives and said:

"Meat is the best of food in this world and in the hereafter." ⁶ And also:

"Eat olive-oil, and anoint with olive-oil, as it is a blessed tree." ⁷ Imani Al-Sadiq A.S. used to prompt people to eat honey, cooking utter, milk, vegetables and assorted fruits, saying: "There is no better cure for people than honey." ⁸ He also said:

"Butter is the best that enters a stomach, but I hate it for the aged." ⁹ "Take to milk, as it grows the flesh and strengthens the bone."¹⁰ "Eating beans increases the marrow of the leg-bones, enlarges the brain and produces fresh blood." ¹¹ Asked about Allah's saying:

"... and let him see what food is purest there and bring you a provision from it." Sure Al-Kahf 18:19 He replied:

"The date is the purest food."¹²

"The raisins strengthen the nerves, relieve fatigue, and give good smell to improve the breath." ¹³ Imam Al- Rida A.S. is quoted to have said:

"Figs cure foul breath, strengthen the mouth and the bone, grow hair, do away with ailment, so there is no need for medicine." ¹⁴ "Eat pears, as they cheer up the heart and calm down stomach pains, by Allah's permission."

These are some of the Traditions and Texts. Besides, many authors have compiled special chapters dealing with food, nourishments and their utilities, so asto keep the body in proper health.

Islam rejects self-torture by depriving the body from the lawful pleasures of food and drink -the self - torture that is called for by those who believe that resisting the natural inclination of the body and torturing it with hunger, thirst and deprivation would bring up spiritual strength and improve psychological and moral faculties. The Qur'an condemns this attitude of the deviationists towards bodily pleasures and the delicacies Allah has bestowed on His servants. It says: "Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good provisions?..." Sura Al-A rat 7:32

B .Marriage:

Islam takes care of all aspects of life in an objective and practical way, giving the body and life their due. Of those bodily and vital questions, which Islam takes good care of, is that of marriage and sexual relations to preserve the human species, to provide stability and spiritual happiness, and to enjoy physical pleasures by man.

Allah the Exalted says: "And of His signs is this: He created for you mates from yourselves that you might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy." Sura Al-Rum 30:21

"... And those of whom ye seek content by marrying them, give unto them their portions as a duty..." Sura Al-Nis8 4:24

So, by matrimonial relations the idea of life can be completed, and the two parts of the physical human system may be united, and the spiritual emptiness and loneliness is apt to be filled up. Through this, matrimonial meeting and the moral and physical sexual unity can reach completion. Islam encourages marriage, shows it love able, and cherishes sexual pleasures, so as to provide man with moral comfort, and a happy feeling of security, and to protect the body against depravity and tension which often develop into cases of sickness affecting soul and body. Thus the Qur'an says: "And of His signs is that: He created for you mates from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy." Sura Al-Rum 30:21

psychologically, the Islamic idea of marriage is directed to fill up moral emptiness, and to produce a feeling of security, amity and mutual sympathy. It goes without saying that this humane feeling-the feeling of amity, love and stability - has great effect on the progress of human life, on human conduct in society, and also soundly protects man's moral and physical health. This is significant from the importance of its motives and aims. The Prophet S.A said: "I like nothing from your world except women and perfumes"¹⁵ Imam Al-Sadiq A.S said:

"I do not think that a man would get better in faith without being more in love with women." ¹⁶ "Of Prophets' be haviour is to love women." ¹⁷ "People have no better pleasure in this world and in the Hereafter than that obtained from women, according to Allah's saying: 'Beautified for mankind is love of desires that come from women and offspring...' Sura Al/main 3:14

The Messenger of Allah S.A said:

"The best of your women is the prolific, affectionate, virtuous, dear to her family, humble to her spouse, displays her charms to her husband,but

chaste to others, listens to what he says, obeys his orders, offers him whatever he wants from her when alone, but not in an unabashed way as man"¹⁸ Imam Ali A.S said:

"Marry, as the Messenger of Allah said: Whoever wants to follow my Tradition, then my Tradition is marriage"¹⁹

C. Clothing and Elegance:

Clothes play a two-sided role in life: On one hand they complete the natural appearance of the body as the body has a certain degree of resistance in respect to other natural surrounding circumstances, such as heat, coldness, humidity, vaporization, etc. So, the clothes are a protective means which keep the body sound and balances it in respect to the natural conditions around it. Man resorts to wearing clothes so as to cover his body and protect it against those natural effects and factors.

Besides this protective role of the clothes, they play another role, which is the role of adornment, beautification and covering the genitals and the ugliness of nudity.. Islam takes care of the clothes and of good appearance, elegance and beauty. The wise Qur'an does not neglect this side of the necessities of life and body, and peoples' inclination to adornment and beautification. In fact, it stresses and confirms this aspect of life, giving man the right to practice it, as God-given blessings:

"O Children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shame..." Sura Al-A raf 7:26

"Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants..." Sura Al-A raf 7:32

"And the cattle He created for you, you have in them warm clothing and itses, and of them yuu eat. And there is beauty in them for you, when you drive them bock home, and when you send them forth to pasture." Sura Al-Nahl 16:5&6

"And He it is Who has constrained the sea to be of service that you may eat fresh meat from it, and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear." Sura Al- Nahl 16 14

Thus, religion has given its approval concerning adornment and beauty, and connected the aesthetic pleasures with the ideological concepts of faith, asserting that man's enjoying of ornamental and aesthetic pleasures is but one of Allah's blessings. It makes man content and happy, and inspires in him love, pleasure and radiance, through a deep feeling of purity and high evaluation of the meanings and values of humanity. There is no wonder, then, that the Qur'an takes such an attitude, because man's inclination towards beauty is an innate feeling stemming from the soul's native direction towards perfection and quest for content and happiness.

The Muslim's awareness of aesthetic topics and values is not confined solely to a sensory feeling and a passing emotional phase. It actually goes beyond that to awaken inside him the flame of spiritual illumination, and the conscious feelings which draws the soul from its physical stagnancy and primitive animal instincts towards the celestial world and moral guidance. This feeling, thus, I becomes a means of spiritual development, and moral completion, making enjoyable the delicacies of life, a bridge connecting man to his Creator. Man is capable of comprehending all these facts through

experiencing an alert feeling of the aesthetic values and topics-clothing, elegance and good appearance. When these feelings are reflected on his innerself, they interact and combine with it to form a living picture of good taste. Such feelings become a conduct and help human attitudes to stand aloof from evil and deformed practices which disfigure the spirit of beauty and establish pictures of ugliness and disgust.

There are so many Traditions stressing the importance which Islam attaches to clothing, elegance and good appearance, of which we cite those uttered by Imam Ta'far ibn Muhammad Al-Sadiq A.S, quoting Imam Ali "Allah is Beautiful and loves beauty, and loves to see the signs of being well-off on His servant."²⁰ Imam Al-Sadiq A.S. told one of his companions:

"The display of prosperity is more liked by Allah than its preservation. So, take care not to dress except in the best of your people's fashion." One of Imam Al-Sadiq's companions has narrated that somebody asked the Imam: "May Allah reform you! you say that Ali ibn Abi Talib A.S. used to wear rough dresses, each bought for four Dirhams or so, while we see you wearing fine dresses . The Imam told him: "Ali ibn Abi Talib A.S. used to do so when that was not denied. The economic condition of the Muslims was not so good. If he wears that now he will be defamed. So, the best dress for an age is the dress of the people of that age. But when our Mahdi appears, he will wear like Ali A.S. and will behave like him, too."²¹

Another of the Imam's companions says: "I asked Aba Abdullah the Imam, if a man had a waqfah²² should he part it or leave it? He said: "He should part it."²³ The Prophet S.A. said: "Whoever grows hair, he should either take good care of it, or shave it."²⁴ Imam Al - Rida A. S. said:

"Perfume is of the prophets' habits ."²⁵

The Prophet S. A. is quoted to have said:

"My friend Gabriel A. S. told me: use perfume every alternate day, but do not leave it on Fridays ."²⁶ By tallying the Qur'anic verses on this subject with the concepts of the stated Traditions - in addition to tens of other Traditions which speak of Islam's point of view concerning human behaviour, - one may conclude that Islam encourages the Muslim individual and the Muslim society to be elegant, neat and of good appearance, so that they may sense the delicacy of existence, and the spirit of creative beauty. Allah's innovations inspire their hearts and pull them towards the great aesthetic truth manifest in the sacred Divine Attributes which overwhelm mankind with happiness and divine love, increasing their remembrance of His blessings, and their thanks to Him.

To prove Islam's respect for beauty, it is sufficient to note that it has made beauty an encouraging reward, granted to man in Paradise. The Qur'an speaks of no blessings in the Hereafter unless it emanates them with illumination of beauty, and never mentions the rewards allotted to the benevolents without speaking first of the attraction and loveliness of beauty and the aesthetic pleasure derived from it. A fact which confirms that the Qur'an regards beauty as one of the most essential subjects of the existence in man's world, worthy of being presented as a reward to the excellent prophets, martyrs and saints in Paradise.

D. Rest and Sleep:

The Human body is an active machine which exerts effort and energy to resist the world around it. Moving and working exhaust a considerable quantity of its energy and power, and thus, it feels tired because of the confusion of the balance of the body's powers in respect to the powers of nature. This sense of fatigue felt by the body is caused by its continual loss of energy and the effort used.

This loss weakens resistance and forces the body to a halt. It looks for a rest in a safe and comfortable place, in order to rebuild itself anew, keeping away the tiring results of movements. It then falls into a sound sleep. Sleep is not man's invention, nor is it a physical accident that imposes itself on man. It is a part of the precise system of existence which has been ordained by the Wise Creator:

"..The handiwork of Allah Who made all things perfectly. Surely He is aware of what you do ." Sure Al - Naml 27:88

Had sleep not been a part of the body's system, there would have been a deficiency in the order of creation and the physical arrangement of man's body. Therefore, Allah' the All-wise and the - All Knowing, ordaind that sleep should be a rest and stillness for man: "And of His signs is your sleeping by night and day..." Sura Al - Rum 30:23

So, slumber is one of Allah's blessing, needed by the body, as through a period of temporary absence from feeling the reactions of the outer world which is tiresome, the body would get a chance to rest, rebuild and recover the lost energy. The Glorious Qur'an and the Traditions encourage rest, sleep and stillness at night, and a nap at daytime, so that man may enjoy comfort and happiness in life, and avoid greed and covetousness in acquiring wealth through too severe endeavours and hardship, badly affecting his health and comfort, and exposing him to diverse physical, and nervous strains, causing him to lose his happiness and enjoyment in life.

Therefore, the Qur'an prescribes rest and sleep so that man may get his necessary share of them. It says:

"And He it is who made night a covering for you, and sleep a repose..."
Sura Al - Furqan 25:4 7

Yet, much as this sleep is essential for man, Islam warns against sleeping for long periods, except as long as needed, so that he may not go beyond the limit of the need, and be overcome by laziness and indolence. To Islam, man should be a mass of activity and production, and a charge offering good and innovation. He should not be allowed to remain idle, nor should he be played with. Consequently, Islam dislikes idleness, aimlessness, wasting of man's time and energy on slumber and laziness. Imam Al - Sadiq A. S. said:

"Too much sleep takes away both religion and the world."²⁷ Imam Au ibn Musa Al - Rida A. S. said:

"Allah the Exalted detests the aimless and the slumberer."²⁸

E. Physical Exercises:

Sports train the body through physical movements and exercises, and give it strength, grace, liveliness and ability, enabling it to endure hard work and difficulties. They also help him to resist illness and weakness, and achieve bigger objectives and present better offerings to life. Sports build up a feeling of power, magnanimity and strength. They also grow the spirit of

patience, bravery and self-confidence. Islam believes in power, magnanimity and activity, and fights against irresponsibility, laziness, flabbiness and inactivity. A Tradition says: "Beware of laziness and boredom, because if you get lazy you will not work, and if you are bored you will not give one's due ." ²⁹ Another Tradition says:

"Avoid wishes, as they take away the splendour of what you are given, make you belittle Allah's gifts in your eyes, and result in your grief over what you had fancied to yourselves." ³⁰

"Laziness and impotence merge, as things merge, resulting into poverty." ³¹ To these spiritual goals the Qur'an calls its people, and encourages them, when bringing-up their generations, to implant in them the spirit of courage and strength. Allah the Exalted says:

"And prepare against them what force you can..." Sure Al-An tel 8:60 To the same effect comes the Prophet's advice to the Muslims to bring-up their sons physically strong. He said "Teach your sons swimming, archery and horseman- ship".

By this invitation to sports and chivalry, the Prophet widely opens the doors to all sorts of physical training and athletic exercises which help to build the body and preserve its abilities.

All Traditions and Narratives confirm and encourage sports. They even speak of the Prophet's participation in tournaments. watching them and encouraging them. Imam Ali ibn Al-Husayn A.S. said:

"The Messenger of Allah S.A. raced horses and ordered for the winners quantities of silver ." ³² Imam Al-Sadiq is quoted to have said:

"The Messenger of Allah S.A. raced lean horses from Al-Hayfa to the mosque of Bani Zorayq, for three date-palms as prizes, giving the first three winners a cluster of dates each ." ³³

He also said, quoting his fore-fathers, the Prophet's progeny, A.S.: "Archery is an arrow of Islam ." ³⁴

He quoted The Prophet's explanation of the following Qur'anic Verse, "Make ready for them all thou canst of armed force , to have said: "That is archery ." ³⁵ Imam Al-Sadiq A.S. said:

"The idolaters raided the pastures of Al-Madina. A caller shouted: What a bad morning! The Prophet S.A. heard the cry, while he was attending the horses. He jumped on his horse to catch the enemy. The first of his comrades to overtake him was Abu Qarada. The Prophet's saddle-flaps were made of palm-fibres, giving no feeling of joy or contentment. They chased the enemy, but found no body. Others arrived on their horses. Abu Qatada said: O Messenger of Allah! the enemy has gone. How about a race ? The Prophet agreed. They raced, the Messenger of Allah S.A. was the winner. He, then, told them: I am the son of the Awatik ³⁶ of Qureish. It is my horse, Al-Bohr the Sea" ³⁷

Secondly: Preserving and Protecting the Human Body

As Islam takes care of building the body, providing the necessities for its survival, and by means of its laws and legislations organizes social life and moral values, it also takes care of preserving the body and protecting it against whatever that may lead to its weakness, decay and loss of energy. It protects the body against diseases, filth and dirt, and calls for immunity and medical treatment, and tries to keep it away from fatigue, tiredness and lavish use of the allowables, or indulge in desires which sap its energies and expose it to diseases and failure. Islam prohibits man from committing whatever brings harm to him and his abilities, such as alcoholic drinks, adultery, consuming harmful food, so that man may preserve his powers and energies by organizing his material life -food, drinks, satisfying desires, etc. Through this legislative programme Islam saves the human body from the dangers of tearing and sanitary collapse. To attain this objective, Islam ordains certain regulations, such as:

1. Call for moderation:

Islam advocates moderation, and prevents man from excess and gluttony in food, drink, sex, desires, and in makin 2 excessive use of the allowables, for when Islam allows food, drink and the other amenities and pleasures, it only aims at keeping the body healthy, preserving it, and affording it pieasure and happIness. Islam's call for moderation is based on essential principles of life. These principles say that man needs only what stays him and keeps his body healthy. Naturally, the body needs limited quantities of food, drink, sex, desire etc. Islam offers a practical explanation of its ethics evaluating sensual pleasure, and stressing that it is not a goal in life, as it is a prompter driving man to exert his lawful efforts to satisfy these needs. This explanation prevents man from becoming a brute, thinking of othing but food, drink, sex, and indulgence in gratifying his whims and desires.

In order to be certain that its conductive principles will be followed, Islam finds the system of life, man's connection to his requirements, and his share of them, on strict calculations and equations void of any disorder and excess. It measures everything and places it in its correct place, demanding that moderation should be practiced in everything in such a manner that it is right to say that Islam's way is that of "moderation and uprightness .

Many Qur'anic Verses and Prophetic Traditions confirm this vital important principle .the principle of moderation which protects man against extravagance and gluttony. The extravagances affect all human behaviour. materially and spiritually. They affect morals, causing the degradation of the nations conducts ;they affect economy, disbalancing its role in the societies and they affect health, causing the physical energies to decline. So, in order to protect the society against this grave psychological plague, Islam laid its firm foundation to enact a serious moral law, the law of moderation and the giving up of gluttony and extravagance.

Therefore, Islam's fight against extravagance is a psychological and moral one, at its start, so as to show their effects later on in the human conduct.

Islam wants to cultivate the habit of moderation and morality in the Muslim to enable him to correctly deal with different vital subjects later on in life. A Tradition says that the Messenger of Allah S.A. saw Jabir ibn Abdullah Al - Ansari using too much water for performing ablution. He said to him: "O Jabir! do not use water excessively.": Jabir asked him: "Can there be any excess in using water, O Messenger of Allah?" "Oh yes , replied the Prophet, "even if you were at a riverside!"

Carefully contemplating this noble narrative, one is apt to realize that, by this prohibition, the Prophet's aim is the psychological and moral education ,based on moderate spending. That is why the Prophet S.A. told him: "Oh yes, even If you were at a riverside!"

Wasting the water, while you are at a riverside, cannot be regarded as extravagance, since there would be no actual loss, as it is plenty enough, and it would return to the river once again, but it would enhance the spirit of prodigality and heedlessness. This principle is coined by the Qur'an in its saying: "O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every time of worship, and eat and drink, but be not prodigal. Surely He does not love the prodigals." Sure Al -A rat 7:31

This is the line followed by the Prophet's Tradition, as he is quoted to have said:

"If you eat for a part of your stomach, you will get healthy,"³⁸ and "Do not kill the hearts with eating and drinking too much, as the heart is like the plant which dies if watered too often,"³⁹ and "I fear three calamities that may befall my people: going astray after knowing, misleading attractions, and appetites for food and sex."⁴⁰

"The son of Adam has but to have a meal to keep his spine upright. So, when you eat, let one-third of your stomach for food, one-third for drink, and one-third for breathing. Do not get fat . Pigs are fattened for butchery."⁴¹

2. Forbidding the Harmful:

The second step taken by Islam to protect health is prohibiting whatever brings harm to the body, and apt to cause illness, such as drinking wine, eating carrion, pork, meat of dogs, rats, and beasts of prey, as well as indulging in adultery, sodomy, masturbation, lesbianism, and the like. Now, with the current scientific progress in preserving health and in medicine, no one is ignorant of the dangers caused by food, drink and abnormal practices on human health and physical abilities.

3. Purification and Cleanliness:

The third step on the road of the Islamic hygienic programme is cleanliness. Dirts and body excretions are the home of germs and microbes, and the source of a number of diseases and physical ailment. Therefore, Islam legislates purification and cleanliness, and imposes on the Muslims to keep away from filths which are regarded to be the origin of endangering human health. Examples of these filths are: urine, excretion, blood, semen, human and some animal corpses, etc.. To achieve cleanliness, Islam legislates purification by water to remove the remnants of filth and to be protected against their harms. It also ordains ablution and the compulsory

bathing after menstruation period, childbirth, sexual intercourse, wet-dreaming, touching a corpse and recommends other baths, such as the Friday bath, according to the Holy Tradition.

Islam also calls the Muslims to clean and purify their houses, the streets, as well as their clothes, food and everything in their lives. Its stress on cleanliness is so persisting that some researchers and orientalisks have called the Islamic culture: "The Culture of Purification and Cleanliness . The main legislation in the Qur'an concerning purification is:

"O you who believe! When you rise up for prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and lightly rub your heads and your feet up to the ankles. And if you are Jun ubu⁴² purify yourselves. And if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you come from the privacy, or you have had contact with women, and you cannot find water, then betake yourselves to clean earth, and wipe your faces and your hands with some of it. Allah would not place a burden on you, but He would purify you and would perfect His grace upon you, that you may be grateful."

Sure Al-Ma ida 5:6

"... Truly Allah loves those who repent to Him, and loves those who purify themselves." Sure Al-Baqara 2:222

On the basis of the above verses, the Messenger S.A. explained the programme of purity, taking care of the society and the Muslim. He regulated rinsing the mouth, sniffing water, cleaning the teeth with toothpicks, washing the hair, wearing clean clothes, clipping the nails, observing cleanliness of food and drink, etc. Imam Al - Sadiq A.S is quoted to have said that the Messenger S.A. saw a dishevelled man with dirty clothes and in a bad condition. He said: "It is religious to enjoy and display blessings.

He also said:

"How bad is a dirty man!" ⁴³

He is also quoted to have said:

"Purification is half of faith." ⁴⁴ "Be clean, as Islam is clean."
"Cleanliness is part of faith." ⁴⁵

There are numerous verses in the Qur'an, as there are many Traditions, which are classified under such subjects as: Cleanliness', Preserving Health', and several others, all of which aim at spreading cleanliness and purity, causing man to feel free from physical and spiritual impurity and filth, and preserve the purity of the natural human instinct, and protect the body against what may befall by filth and impurities, so as to guard physical soundness, and to educate the feeling of spiritual purity and look for it. By physical cleanliness one gets used to rid oneself of any strange thing that may badly affect the order of life, whether concerning the body, behaviour or ideology.

4. Immunity and Medical Treatment:

Protection against diseases and their medical treatment are the last steps in the Islamic health and physical education programme. Islam regards protection and immunity against diseases as a major principle of securing human health. Consequently, the Islamic legislation fixes all the necessary principles, such as: cleanliness, moderation in eating and drinking, avoiding

prodigality, coordinating all human duties in respect to man's abilities and endurance - a principle which is true in respect to all kinds of duties ordained by Allah, such as: worshipping rites and duties including fasting, praying, pilgrimage. jihad, etc.

Starting from this principle, Islam exempts the aged and those who cannot endure from fasting, pilgrimage, jihad, and other difficult duties, so as to spare their health and ward expected harm off them, in accordance with the rules of justice and wisdom defined by the following Verse: "Allah does not impose a duty on a soul beyond its Scope...." Sure Al - Baqara 2.286

There is a further step taken by Islam on the road of protection against diseases, a legislative step concerning quarantine regulations and keeping away from disease concentrations, A Tradition says:

"Run away from a leper as you run away from a lion."⁴⁶ And also:

"If you heard of a township afflicted with colera do not enter it, and if it appeared where you are do not leave the place."⁴⁷ The Islamic philosophy of medical treatment and prevention is based on the existence of a natural relationship among all the interlinked things, as every incident in this world is connected to a number of causes, or perhaps, to a series of natural causes. These things - the causes and effects - which fall within a single group, interact with each other. Such general concepts are applicable to man's physical nature, and its outer connection with things, such as undernourishment and overstraining oneself, which cause physical feebleness.

Germs and alcohol cause physical sickness and affect the soundness of the order of the body; some medicines and herbs and certain foods help the body to keep its natural system, or assist it to attack the morbid microbes and kill them.

Thus, a Tradition says:

"For every malady there is a cure; So, if a cure gets the malady it cures it by will of Allah the Exalted ."⁴⁸ The existence of this natural relationship among elements reflects full wisdom of Allah the Exalted, showing the precision of His creating this world whose function is based on interlinked rules and systems.

Had it not been for medicine and the possibility of amending a disordered body, the human life would have been subjected to confusion and quick ruin, and, actually, that would have caused a disorder in the system of creation. Glorified He be above all that, as He is the Wise, the All - knowing Who exacted everything wisely and measurely!

"And you see the mountains, you think them solid, and they shall pass as the passing away of clouds; the handiwork of Allah Wit. made all things perfectly. Surely He is Aware of what you do." Sura Al - Naml 27:88

Thirdly: Proper Use Of Physical Abilities

The Islamic programme, thus takes the form of an orderly perfection covering the bodily system and its diverse material needs, starting from affording its physical requirements in the first place, and arranging to protect and preserve it in the second; then coming to the most important stage, in the third place, it , employs the human energies, and explains how to use and exploit them.

So, the human energy in this world, is the most advanced of the created powers, in its kind, value and nature, if it is utilized in a sound way according to Allah's programme and wisdom.

Offering man the necessary information and guidance in employing huge human energy in constructive projects, Islam defines the line of behaviour and conduct, so that he may not misuse it towards evil and transgression, nor exhaust it in fields of trifling play and diversion.

Utilizing these human abilities wrongly and in an improper way is regarded by Islam as a kind of transgression against the system of existence, and a process of wasting man's noble aims and values in this life. so, the voice of the Qur'an raises its warning against falling in to this destructive pit of misbehaviour, saying: ***"But seal the future abode by means of that which Allah has given you and neglect not your portion of the world, and do good to others as Allah has been good to you, and seek not corruption in the earth. Surely Allah does not love corrupters."***

Sura Al-Qasas 28: 77

"Nay, surely man is rebellious. That he thinks himself independent!"
Sura Al- A'laq 96:6-7

"And if Allah were to enlarge the provision for His servants they would surely rebel in the earth..." ***Sura Al-Shura 42:27***

"The way of blame is only against those who oppress mankind, and wrongfully rebel in the earth..." ***Sura Al -Shura 42:28***

"... Let not the life of the world beguile you, nor let the deceiver beguile you in regard to Allah." ***Sura Luqman 31:33***

"As for Ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: who is mightier than us in power? Could they not see that Allah Who created them, was mightier than them in power? And they denied Our revelations." ***Sura Ha Mim 41: 15***

So, contemplating these Qur'anic verses with a scrutinizing look, we come to the following conclusion:

Oppression, corruption, arrogance, tyranny, injustice, and pride, are all abnormal psychological cases, deviated human feelings and incorrect evaluation of man's power and ability, which cause him to use these physical, mental and psychological powers in a foolish and destructive way. The Qur'an warns against such misbehaviour and abnormal use which lead mankind to the precipice of tragedy and pain.

In order that man may realize his real value and make himself deserving, the Qur'an continually draws his attention to the greatness of his Creator and His power, and to man's triviality in regard to the great Creator. It says:

"Could they not see that Allah Who created them, was mightier than them in power?" ***Sura Ha Mim 41:15***

A Tradition puts this in a different style:

"When your might calls upon you to do wrong to somebody, remember Allah is mightier than you." This is in order that man may use his power and ability to his interest and for the good of mankind as a whole, according to the Qur'an's plan and its wonderful standards: "... and do good to others as Allah has been good to you, and seek not corruption in the earth, Surely Allah does not love corrupters." Sura Al - Qasas 28: 77 29

The Qur'an even displays a wonderful example of the faithful personality who is good at making use of his energies, and knows how to handle them. It says:

"Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor- due and enjoin good and forbid evil. And Allah's the sequel of events." Sura Al - Hal 22:41

In this way Islam perfects its programme of organizing man's physical and instinctive life in a harmonious and balanced way, so that the body may be in its proper disposition, concerning its needs, or preserving and protecting man in the way he uses his abilities. Once a bedouin came to the Prophet S. A. and asked him:

"O Messenger of Allah! Who is the best of men?"

He replied: "The best of men is the one who lived long, and did good deeds." It is this sound natural physical state which we describe as "healthy", and it is this same state to which the great Messenger, Muhammad, S.A. W. refers by saying:

"Two blessings are unknown: Health and Security."

Thus health is a blessing bestowed on mankind by Allah the Exalted. It should be preserved, and utilized to the best, as a means of getting nearer to Allah.

PRAISE BE TO ALLAH, LORD OF THE WORLDS.

Notes

1. A.S.: are the abbreviations of the Arabic phrase "alayhi/ha/him AI-salam mey peace be upon him/her/them.
2. Al-Kulayni, "Furu' Al-Kafi, The Book of Foods', Vol. 6, p.287, ed. 1971.
3. Ibid., p.287,
4. Ibid., p 287.
5. S.A. are the abbreviations of the Arabic phrase "Sal-lallahu ala yhi wa alih i' May Allah bless him and his progeny.
6. Ibid., P. 308.
7. Ibid., p. 231.
8. Ibid., p. 332.
9. Ibid, p 335.
10. Ibid., p. 337.
11. Ibid., p. 344.
12. Ibid., p. 345.
13. Ibid., p. 352.
14. Ibid., p. 358.
15. Al-Kulayni, "Al-Kafi, KitabAl-Nikah', p.321.
16. Ibid., p. 320.
17. Ibid., p.320.,
18. Ibid., p.324.
19. Ibid., p.329
20. Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi, The Book of Fashion and Adornment Vol. 6,p.438, ed. 1971
21. Ibid., p. 444.
22. Wafra is thick hair behind the ears.
23. Al-Kulayni, Ibid., p.485.
24. Ibid., p.485.
25. Ibid, p.510.
26. Ibid., p.511.
27. Al- Kulayni, "Al - Kafi, Vol.5, pB4, ed. 1971.
28. Ibid., p. 84.
29. Ibid., P. 85, quoting Imam Al-Ride AS..
30. Ibid., P. 85, quoting Imam Al-Sadiq AS..
31. Ibid., P. 86, quoting Imam, All AS..
32. Ibid., vol 5, P 49, ed 1971
33. Ibid., P. 48.
34. Ibid., P. 49.
35. Ibid., P. 49.
36. Awatik' is pl. of Atika, which is the name of three of the Prophet's grand-mothers.
37. Al-Kulayni, "Al-Kafi, Vol. 5. P 51.
38. Al - Naraqji, JamiAl - Se adat vol. 2, p.8, ed. 1963.
39. Ibid., p.4.
40. Ibid., p.4.
41. Ibid., p.5. Reference to what the non-muslims do.
42. "A Junub is the one who is regarded unclean after a sexual intercourse, a wet-dream or masturbation.
43. Al - Kulayni, "Al - Kafi The Book of Fashion and Adornment'.
44. Abdulla shubbar, Al - Akhlaq "p. 22.
45. Ibid. p. 30.
46. Afd Tebere, Ruh A' - OTh A' - Islami, p. 443.
47. Ibid., p. 443.
48. Ibid., p. 443.

**All rights reserved for Al-Hassanain p Network Imam Hussain p
Foundation**

Alhassanain p Network for Heritage and Islamic Thought

www.alhassanain.org/english