

The Approach to Protection from Infectious Diseases in Light of the Prophetic Sunnah

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Abstract

Infectious diseases, notably the recent Coronavirus pandemic, have become a major global challenge, claiming millions of lives and continuing to pose a threat today. This research aims to highlight the prophetic approach to preventing infectious diseases and to establish the principles and practices that ensure their prevention. It addresses the lack of knowledge and understanding regarding the scientific and practical guidance found in the purified Prophetic tradition. The research underscores the significance of this issue, examining its impact on individuals and society and clarifying the prophetic warnings and preventive measures. The methodology includes an inductive approach to gather relevant information from the Prophetic tradition and prominent scholarly works on health and a descriptive-analytical approach to analyze texts and extract regulatory principles. Practical examples from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) illustrate these applications. The contribution of this research lies in offering a comprehensive perspective on how the purified Prophetic tradition addresses societal health issues, particularly infectious diseases. The findings emphasize the need for collective efforts to combat infectious diseases and raise awareness about the Prophet's health guidelines, aiming to educate and train individuals to benefit from these teachings.

Keywords: Means of Preventing Infectious Diseases, Prophetic Sunnah, Research

Introduction

Infectious Diseases and Epidemics: These are diseases that are transmitted from one person to another or from several individuals through respiration, contact, coughing, blood transfusion, sexual intercourse, or other means. Epidemic (الوباء): Every highly contagious disease that spreads rapidly from one place to another, affecting humans, animals, and plants, usually fatal, such as plague, cholera, Coronavirus, and others. The World Health Organization

has defined it as A situation where a specific disease is greater than expected in a particular community, geographic area, season, or timeframe. An epidemic may occur in a confined geographic area or spread across several countries, lasting for several days or weeks, and may even continue for years (Al-Jazeera, 2023).

Preventive Means Against Infectious Diseases before their Occurrence and their Application to the Coronavirus

The pure Sunnah came with many means and reasons that prevent the spread of contagious diseases, foremost among them the Coronavirus, and the most important of these means:

Public Order Regarding Cleanliness and Purity

The increase in the number of Coronavirus infections and the possibility of increasing the chances of infection made scientists and researchers emphasize that maintaining daily hygiene of the body, utensils used for food and drink, and public places, and sanitizing them is the only way to contain this pandemic, reduce its danger, and possibly essentially eliminate it. This order advocated by researchers, scientists, and health organizations worldwide is what the pure Sunnah has advocated for over four hundred years.

One aspect of Islam's concern for cleanliness is that Allāh has established prayer as a condition. He says:

وَأَمْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلِكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَتَيْنِ " يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهَّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ "

"O you who believe! When you intend to offer Aş-Şalāt (the prayer), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of Janāba (i.e., after a sexual discharge), purify yourselves (bathe your whole body). But if you are ill or on a journey, or any of you comes from the Ghā'it (toilet), or you have been in contact with women (i.e., sexual intercourse), and you find no water ,then perform Tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands(2). Allāh does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you and complete His Favor so that you may be thankful." (Surah Al-Ma'idah: 6).

The purified Sunnah considered cleanliness and personal hygiene among the most important Islamic values and an integral part of faith, which made them receive significant attention in Islamic Sharia. It is no longer seen as merely commendable behavior from its doer and condemnable from its neglect. Still, instead, Islam made it a matter of faith for which the doer is rewarded and the neglecter is sinning.

Abu Hurairah (May Allāh be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "Iman has sixty odd or seventy odd branches. The uppermost of all these is the Testimony of Faith: 'La ilaha illallah' (there is no true god except Allāh), while the least of them is the removal of harmful objects from the road. And shyness is a branch of Iman" (Muslim, n. d.). One of the most significant indications of Islam's concern for cleanliness is that it made it a characteristic of the worshippers of Allāh who fill His homes with remembrance and prayer.

" فِي بُيُوتِ أَذْنِ اللَّهِ أَنْ تُزْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ (36) رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ "

In houses (mosques) which Allāh has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honored), in His Name is remembered [i.e., Adhan, Iqamah, Ṣalāt (prayers), invocations, recitation of the Qur'ān, etc.]. Therein glorify Him (Allāh) in the mornings, afternoons, or evenings. Men who neither trade nor sell (business) divert from the Remembrance of Allāh (with heart and tongue), nor from performing Aṣ-Ṣalāt (Iqāmat-aṣ-Ṣalāt), not from giving the Zakāt. They fear a Day when hearts and eyes will be overturned (out of the horror of the torment of the Day of Resurrection)." (Sūrat An-Nūr: 36-37)

The Prophet (ﷺ) made cleanliness half of faith. Abu Malik al-Ash'ari reported: The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Purification is half of faith, and (Alhamdu lillahi) fills the scale; and (Subhana Allāh) and Al-hamdu li-Allah fill up what is between the heavens and the earth. Prayer is light, charity is proof (of one's faith), patience is a brightness; and the Quran is proof (of one's faith) for or against you. All people go out early in the morning and sell themselves, either setting themselves free or ruining themselves" (Muslim, n.d). One of the most important reasons for cleanliness is:

Being Keen On Performing Ablution (Wudu)

Islam has legislated ablution and made it a condition for the acceptance of prayer, along with the commitment it entails for the visible parts of the body, which are most susceptible to contamination, to cleanliness. Abu Huraira reported God's messenger as saying, "The prayer of one who has voided excrement will not be accepted until he performs ablution." (Bukhari: 2001). Referring to doctors and health organizations, we find that ablution plays an effective role in preventing infectious diseases, foremost among them being the Coronavirus. Dr. Osama Raslan, Secretary-General of the Arab Medical Union, stated in a session titled "The Novel Coronavirus between Exaggeration and Minimization": "Islamic teachings have laid the foundations of preventive medicine and the prevention of such diseases through ablution, which requires a person to wash his body five times a day. It is one of the best ways to prevent diseases, including COVID-19, as it reduces the chances of contracting viral and epidemic diseases," citing the prophetic hadith: "Tell me, if there were a river at the door of one of you in which he washed five times daily, would any of his filthiness remain?" (Badr, 2020).

Washing Hands

The purified Sunnah has emphasized the cleanliness of hands as they are one of the most important means of transmitting viruses to the mouth, nose, or eyes and transmitting infection from person to person or to others. There are noble Hadiths recommending attention to washing and cleaning hands, especially in the following cases: 1- Upon waking up from sleep: Narrated by Abu Huraira, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "When one of you wakes up from sleep, he should not dip his hand in the utensil until he washes it three times, for he does not know where his hand was." (Muslim: n.d). 2- Before and after meals: Salman reported: "I read in the Torah that the blessing of food lies in ablution after it." He said: "I mentioned it to the Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) and informed him of what I had read in the Torah. He said: 'The blessing of food lies in ablution before it and ablution after it.'" (Al-Shaibani: 1995). With the intensification of the coronavirus crisis, all health organizations have recommended maintaining hand hygiene as one of the strongest

means of avoiding infection. According to RT Arabic channel (2020), a new study conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge has shown the importance of handwashing in slowing down the spread of viruses. The study, published in *Risk Analysis*, used epidemiological modeling and data-based simulation to determine the impact of improving personal hygiene on the virus transmission rate. The researchers clarified from available data that many people do not wash their hands after using the toilet or may not do so correctly. They revealed that maintaining hand hygiene, especially during travel, can reduce the potential spread of deadly infections by 24 to 69%. The study authors stated that disseminating "preventive strategies" on 10 Main websites could reduce disease risks by up to 37%. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) specify the best method for effectively washing hands. They explained: "Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after coughing or sneezing. And if soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol."

Prohibition of Sneezing in People's Faces to Avoid Spreading Infection

One of the main reasons for the spread of the Coronavirus is the transmission of droplets from the infected to the healthy. Narrated by Abu Huraira, may Allāh be pleased with him that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to cover his face with his hand or his garment and muffle the sound when he sneezed (Al-Hakim, 1990). The reason behind covering the mouth is apparent: to prevent the sneeze droplets from reaching other people. During the coronavirus pandemic, studies have proven that airborne droplets from individuals infected with the Coronavirus play a significant role in the rapid spread of the disease. According to Lydia Bourouiba (2020), a Massachusetts Institute of Technology fluid dynamics scientist, the droplets generated by sneezing "can travel up to 27 feet... This affects the number of people meeting in one place, especially if airflow is not regularly changed." Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, USA, used high-speed cameras and other sensing devices to assess what happens following coughing or sneezing accurately. They found that exhaling produces a small, rapidly moving gas cloud containing various sizes of droplet spray, with the smallest droplets traveling long distances (Shukman, 2020).

Prohibition of Spitting on the Ground

Undoubtedly, spitting in the streets, roads, and public places, besides being uncivilized behavior, is a behavior that transmits infectious diseases, as proven by numerous modern studies. Additionally, it contributes to the spread of dirt and harm to people. For this reason, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited spitting on the ground, stating that it is among the moral vices and contrary to the refined Islamic etiquette. He commanded eliminating this phenomenon and removing its traces to prevent it from becoming a source of infection. Abu Tharr reported God's Messenger as saying, "The deeds of my people, good and bad, were presented before me, and I found the removal of something objectionable from the road among their good deeds, and mucus left unburied in the mosque among their evil deeds" (Muslim, n. d). In the context of combating the Coronavirus, explaining its spread causes and how to confront it, according to Al Ittihad newspaper (2013), Dr. Afaf Al-Masri, a specialist in nose and throat diseases, warned of the effects caused by the spitting phenomenon. She pointed out that studies have revealed that spitting leads to the transmission of 70% of viral diseases, such as common and severe respiratory tract infections,

pulmonary tuberculosis, and upper respiratory tract microbes, such as the common cold and flu.

Additionally, tuberculosis, considering that the tuberculosis microbe is resistant to nature and can survive for months, especially in places not exposed to sunlight. It proliferates rapidly in the air and dust. Therefore, if a patient spits on the ground and the spittle dries, the airborne dust carries the microbe, which is then inhaled by a healthy person, leading to infection.

Prohibition of Breathing or Blowing into the Vessel or Cup While Drinking

It is the Sunnah (tradition) to drink water in three breaths, pausing and removing the vessel from one's mouth after each sip, then returning it to take another sip. This manner is more refined in etiquette, lessens greediness, and is gentler on the stomach. Hence, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited breathing or blowing into the vessel while eating or drinking because doing so may cause saliva to come out from the mouth, mixing with the water, which might affect the drinker. Additionally, it could result in an unpleasant odor from the mouth if altered, as water is delicate and easily absorbs odors, not to mention the possibility of transmitting infectious diseases (Lasheen, 2002). Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri reported that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited blowing into the vessel while drinking. A man asked, "I see foam (scum) in the vessel?" The Prophet replied, "Then, spill it away." The man said, "But I don't quench my thirst with one sip," and the Prophet said, "Then, so move the vessel away from your mouth" (At-Tirmidhi, 1975). According to Ibn Abbas, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited breathing or blowing into the vessel (At-Tirmidhi, 1975). The wisdom behind the prohibition of blowing or breathing into the vessel was explained by Ibn Hajar, who stated, "There are several Hadiths about the prohibition of blowing into the vessel or breathing in it. This could cause a change in the breath, either because the person blowing or breathing had a changed mouth due to eating, for example, or because of a lack of using a toothstick or mouthwash, or because the breath rises with stomach vapors. Blowing in these circumstances is worse than breathing" (Ibn Hajar, 1959). Therefore, it is advisable not to share utensils, especially during a pandemic like COVID-19. Health organizations have recommended avoiding drinking from a vessel previously used by someone else unless it is thoroughly washed with soap and water.

Preserving Food and Drink Utensils from Contamination

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) commanded the preservation of food and drink utensils and their protection from contamination. He explained that certain diseases and epidemics occur during specific seasons. If they coincide with a vessel lacking a cover or a drinking container without a rim, they may descend into it. Jabir b. 'Abdullah reported Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: "Cover the vessels and tie the waterskin, for there is a night in a year when pestilence descends, and it does not pass an uncovered vessel or an untied waterskin, but some of that pestilence descending into it" (Muslim, n. d).

This hadith indicates the prophetic miracle, as observation and experience testify that some epidemics occur during specific seasons of the year, and certain diseases emerge in cycles or waves over the years. This is evident in the multiple waves of the COVID-19 virus. Dr. Ali Abu Hashim (2016) states: "Modern medicine has proven that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the first to establish rules for maintaining health by preventing the spread of infectious diseases and epidemics. It has been shown that infectious diseases spread during

specific seasons of the year, and some diseases appear in certain numbers of years according to a precise system that is not yet fully understood. Examples include measles and polio, which increase in September and October, while typhoid fever increases in summer. Cholera follows a cycle every seven years and smallpox every three years. This explains the scientific miracle in the Prophet's saying: 'For there is a night during the year when plague descends,' indicating seasonal epidemics with specific times. How did the Prophet know all of this when he neither read nor wrote, nor was he a researcher in medical sciences or others? Truly, he did not speak of his desires; it was only revelation inspired to him."

Avoiding Sources of Diseases and Epidemics

Islamic teachings implicitly emphasize the necessity of living away from sources of diseases and protecting the urban environment from pollution that leads to many infectious diseases and epidemics. These teachings have been translated into practical applications throughout Islamic history. One of the prominent teachings regarding protecting the urban environment from sources of diseases and epidemics is found in the authentic Sunnah, which mandates the Purification of all places frequented by Muslims and safeguarding them from pollution. Narrated by Mu'adh ibn Jabal: "The Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) said, 'Beware of three things that cause curses: defecating in watering places, at the meeting place of caravans, and in the shade" (Abu Dawood, 2009).

Prohibition of Urinating in Water

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited urinating in water, whether stagnant or flowing. Narrated by Jabir: "The Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) forbade urinating in stagnant water" (Muslim, n.d.). And he also reported the Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) said: "The Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) prohibited urinating in flowing water" (At-Tabarani, n. d.). The wisdom behind prohibiting urination in water is not to contaminate it if it is little, and not to pollute it if it is abundant"(Al-Hareemli, 2002). Dr. Musa Shahin Lashin (2002) explains that Islam elevated the importance of water cleanliness, as Arabs, in their nomadic lifestyle, did not prioritize water hygiene. Islam prohibited urinating in stagnant water, bathing in non-flowing water and immersing themselves in wells and stagnant water bodies to cleanse their impurities, as these actions could contaminate water sources and deter people from using it for Purification, drinking, or cooking.

The Prohibition Against Relieving Oneself in the Shade and Under Fruit-Bearing Trees

Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prohibited relieving oneself in places frequented by people or those utilized for their benefit, as it may cause harm to those who come into contact with such places and contribute to the spread of diseases and epidemics. Narrated by Ibn Umar: "The Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) prohibited urinating under a fruit-bearing tree and on the banks of a flowing river" (At-Tabarani, 1994). Scholars unanimously agree that it is not permissible to urinate or defecate in the shade people benefit from, citing the previous hadith narrated by Mu'adh ibn Jabal (Ibn Qudamah, 1968). The apparent consensus among the jurists is that the prohibition is out of dislike, and Ad-Dasuqi emphasized the prohibition, saying: "The apparent ruling is that relieving oneself in the shade, on the road, or under a fruitful tree, and similar places, is prohibited." Similarly, Ash-Shirbini conveyed from An-Nawawi's statements in Al-Majmu' that it is appropriate to prohibit it due to authentic reports and to prevent harm to Muslims. Seeking shade in the summer is analogous to gathering in the sun during the winter, as stated by the jurists.

Avoiding sources of diseases and epidemics is essential for preventing their transmission and reducing the risk of infection.

Preventive Means Against Infectious Diseases after Their Occurrence and Their Application to the Coronavirus

Adhering to Disease Prevention Means

God Almighty has commanded us to take precautions and avoid anything harmful to humans, the foremost of which is precautions against diseases. God Almighty says: *إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ* "Verily, We established him in the earth, and We gave him the means of everything. 85. So, he followed a way" (Surah Al-Kahf: 84-85). And He also says: *" وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ*" " And do not throw yourselves into destruction (by not spending your wealth in the Cause of Allāh), and do good. Truly, Allāh loves Al-Muḥsinūn (the good-doers)" (Surah Al-Baqarah: 195). The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, warned against entering areas afflicted with diseases and prohibited staying in them. Narrated by Usamah ibn Zaid: Sa'd related that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; but if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place So I said, "You heard him saying this to Sa'd and he does not deny it?" He said, "Yes" (Al-Bukhari, 2001).

Quarantine

It is the restriction of movement for anyone exposed to an infectious disease, isolating them for a period equivalent to the most extended incubation period of that disease. If their safety is confirmed, the quarantine is lifted. Otherwise, they are isolated upon confirmation of infection. Quarantine is considered one of the most essential preventive measures to limit the spread of disease, especially when the world is facing the "coronavirus" pandemic. The noble Sunnah came with hadiths akin to miracles at a time when medical knowledge had no understanding of isolation and quarantine. The Prophet, peace be upon him, explained the application of quarantine clearly. Usamah ibn Zaid reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, mentioned the plague and said, "It is a punishment and a mercy sent upon a group of the Children of Israel. So if it occurs in a land while you are present there, do not leave it, and if it occurs in a land where you are not present, do not enter it" (Ibn Hibban, 1988).

Abdul Rahman ibn Awf reported: I heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him, saying, "If you hear of it (plague) in a land, do not go forward to it, and if it occurs in a land where you are, do not depart in flight from it." (Al-Bukhari: 2001). These mentioned hadiths, and others demonstrate the prophetic approach in dealing with pandemics, facing these divine trials with other divine measures, and taking the means of salvation. This applies to our current situation amidst the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. The Prophet, peace be upon him, elucidated in these hadiths the quarantine method, prohibiting people from entering the plague-stricken town and preventing the inhabitants from leaving it. He urged them not to leave their houses so as not to spread the contagion among people.

Ibn al-Khatib mentions in an innovative treatise how the infection spreads between neighboring houses, relatives, and visitors and through ships to coastal cities. He says, "It is not hidden from those who consider this matter that those who associate with the infected with this disease perish while those who do not associate with them remain safe. Similarly, if the disease occurs in a house or a neighborhood from a garment or utensil, the plague

destroys whoever comes into contact with it and devastates the entire house. From the house, the disease spreads to those nearby, then to their neighbors, relatives, and visitors until the breach widens. Also, coastal cities are not immune if the disease reaches them via the sea through an incoming ship from a city where the epidemic has been reported" (Ibn al-Khatib, 2015).

Following this prophetic approach, the companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, acted. When the plague struck Sham, Umar al-Farooq, may Allāh be pleased with him, returned with the people and did not enter it. Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said to him, "Is it fleeing from the decree of Allāh?" Umar replied, "If someone else said it, O Abu Ubaidah! Yes, it would be fleeing from the decree of Allāh to the decree of Allāh" (Al-Bukhari, 2001). With this understanding, Umar al-Farooq, may Allāh be pleased with him, could apply the prophetic guidance and protect the Muslims with him from the risks of infection. In the terrifying spread of the coronavirus pandemic, we need social distancing and staying at home to prevent the spread of disease among people and to preserve their health and lives, as preserving life is one of the greatest objectives of the noble Sharia.

Modern studies have proven that quarantine plays a significant role in combating many diseases that have claimed millions of lives throughout history, including the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). In this regard, the "Cochrane Library" published a systematic review of several studies examining the impact of quarantine on the spread of the new Coronavirus, attempting to determine the effectiveness of quarantine measures alone in combating the pandemic and whether taking additional preventive measures alongside them could yield better results. This review revealed that simulation models of quarantine scenarios have shown that they play a vital role in controlling the spread of COVID-19 compared to any other preventive measures implemented without it. It led to a reduction in the infection rate ranging from 44% to 81%, and the mortality rate ranged from 31% to 63%. Combining quarantine measures with other preventive measures, such as school closures, travel bans, and adherence to social distancing, had a greater impact on reducing the number of cases requiring critical care and deaths compared to implementing quarantine measures alone (Al-Hamza, 2021).

Treatment

Treatment, in general, is permissible. Abud Darda' reported God's messenger as saying, "God has sent down both the disease and the cure, and He has appointed a cure for every disease, so treat yourselves medically, but use nothing unlawful" (Abu Dawood, 2009). Scholars have differed regarding the ruling on seeking medical treatment, with two opinions prevailing: The first opinion, held by most scholars from the Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali schools, is that seeking medical treatment is permissible. They cited various pieces of evidence, such as the Prophet's saying, peace be upon him, "Allāh has not sent down any disease except that He has also sent down its cure. Some may know it, while others may remain ignorant of it" (Ash-Shaybani, 1995). And his saying, peace be upon him, "For every disease, there is a cure. So, when the cure of the disease is found, it is cured with the permission of Allāh, the Exalted" (Ash-Shaybani, 1995). They also mentioned several texts indicating the benefit of seeking medical treatment.

The second opinion, held by the Shafi'i school and many early and later scholars, is that seeking medical treatment is recommended. They cited various evidence, among which I choose one clear proof: Usamah bin Sharik said: "Some Bedouins asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w) shall we treat (our ill)?' He said: 'Yes, O worshipers of Allāh! Use remedies. Indeed, Allāh did not make a disease, but He made a cure for it - or remedy. Except for one disease.' They said: 'O Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w)! What is it?' He said: 'Old age" (At-Tirmithi, 1975). These are the two well-known opinions on the matter. There is a third opinion, less mentioned, as it is held by a few scholars, some of whom consider it a valid position within the school of thought, particularly among the Shafi'i scholars. This opinion suggests that seeking medical treatment is obligatory, especially if the patient fears harm to themselves (Al-Kuwaytiya, 2006). If we want to apply the jurisprudence of this issue to the reality of taking a COVID vaccine, we should consider the following:

1. The vaccine is recommended for healthy individuals, as those who take the vaccine are not yet infected. However, considering the reality of infectious diseases like "COVID-19," it is within jurisprudence to consider healthy individuals as potentially ill due to the high probability of infection. Sharia principles support this, such as the principle that outcomes should be considered, and the judgment is based on what is most likely to occur. Thus, Sharia law considers potential outcomes and rules in the present according to the probable outcome.
2. The reality of epidemics is that they spread rapidly, and combating them should be faster than their spread. Moreover, when considering the occurrence of an epidemic, the focus is not on the individual but on the collective. Therefore, while an individual may have the choice to take the vaccine, the situation changes when considering the collective.
3. The reality of authorized vaccines from competent authorities demonstrates their effectiveness and safety, by the permission of Allāh, in combating diseases. Through the facilitation of these vaccines, many lives have been saved. For example, by the grace of Allāh, measles vaccines saved the lives of 23 million people between 2000 and 2018. Considering the ruling on seeking medical treatment, which can reach the level of obligation in some cases, and considering the reality of epidemics and the harms they cause to lives and property, protecting them aligns with the objectives of Sharia. Furthermore, considering the effectiveness of vaccines, which is close to certainty, taking the vaccine falls within the obligation to preserve lives and protect both religious and worldly interests. This disease's harm extends beyond the individual, making taking the vaccine part of the religious obligation to safeguard lives and protect their interests (Al-Majid, 2021).

These are among the methods, principles, and means brought by the pure Sunnah to preserve human health and protect it from all diseases, especially infectious ones.

Conclusion

The purified Sunnah is the key to giving and the beacon of guidance, offering interpretations and directives for every facet of human life. It provides comprehensive insights into the ethical and practical approaches to various challenges, including health and disease prevention. In particular, infectious diseases are among the most significant problems confronting human society today. Their far-reaching effects require coordinated efforts to mitigate their impact on individuals and communities.

The prevention of infectious diseases has been extensively addressed in the purified Sunnah, which offers numerous guidelines and mechanisms to confront this imminent threat. The Sunnah emphasizes the importance of addressing infectious diseases and provides practical strategies to prevent their spread and minimize their harmful consequences. Through its teachings, it has outlined various preventive measures to safeguard individuals and communities from the destructive effects of epidemics.

Furthermore, the purified Sunnah has introduced numerous ways and mechanisms for reducing the risks associated with such deadly outbreaks. These preventive steps are essential in limiting the scope of harm and enhancing societal resilience in the face of health crises. It is the responsibility of the Islamic nation, both individually and collectively, to be well-versed in the prophetic approach to health matters, ensuring the preservation of human health with a particular emphasis on preventing infectious diseases.

Preventive measures against infectious diseases are not merely a health issue but a religious obligation. It aligns with the broader religious goals of protecting life, religion, wealth, intellect, and honor. Therefore, the pursuit of disease prevention serves as a vital act of fulfilling the religious duty to safeguard human well-being. Preventing infectious diseases is one of the most effective means of preserving human existence. It ensures the capacity of humanity to inhabit the earth and fulfill the purpose for which it was created, maintaining both physical and spiritual integrity.

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