

The Dimensions of Prophetic Medication

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Abstract

Due to Prophetic medication intersects with the realm of modern medicine, offering a complementary approach to healthcare. Many individuals seek prophetic remedies alongside conventional medical treatments, and there is an emerging interest in researching the potential benefits of these practices. This paper aims to discuss about the diverse dimensions of prophetic medication, shedding light on its some significant categories which are the ethics, preventive, curative and the psychological and spiritual medication.

Keywords: Medication, Prophet, Hadith, Islam.

Introduction

Prophetic medication, often referred to as "Tibb al-Nabawi" in Islamic tradition, represents a unique and profound aspect of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It encompasses a holistic approach to health and well-being that has been a source of guidance and inspiration for Muslims for centuries (Shams Shirazi, 2023). This approach, rooted in the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad, serves as a testament to the comprehensive nature of his mission, which extended beyond matters of faith and spirituality to include guidance on physical and mental health.

The significance of prophetic medication lies not only in its historical and religious context but also in its enduring relevance in today's world. In an era marked by advancements in medical science and a growing interest in holistic health, the wisdom of the Prophet's guidance on health and healing remains a source of inspiration and guidance for Muslims and non-Muslims alike (Orayj, 2022). Based on that, this paper aims to explore the dimensions of prophetic medication according to the view of Islamic scholars.

Prophetic medication in early session

The concept of prophetic medicine, as it is commonly acknowledged, was not directly addressed by the prophet Mohammad (PBUH) during his lifetime. This is understandable, given that the term "prophetic medicine" itself did not exist in his era; it was coined by scholars who came after him to facilitate comprehension and emphasize its significant benefits (Ragab, 2009). Due to the absence of a precise definition of prophetic medicine, the early scholars in this field did not organize their findings into specific categories within their works. This is not surprising, as their primary objective at that time was to amass and compile as much relevant information as possible. For instance, in the book "Al-Ahkam Al-Nabawiyyah fi Al-Sina'ah Al-Tibbiyyah" authored by 'Ala Uddin Al-Kahhal, it is evident that he presented hadiths related to diseases, their treatments, and Arab medicine in the first chapter. However, he also included hadiths advocating moderation in eating, which pertains more to preventive treatment, within the discussion of curative treatment, before subsequently revisiting the topic of curative treatment and medication. It might be more appropriate for these hadiths on preventive treatment to be placed in the second chapter of his book, where he had compiled numerous hadiths related to health maintenance (Al-Kahhal, 1955).

Similarly, in the book "Al-Tibb Al-Nabawi" by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, hadiths concerning diseases and their treatments are presented at the beginning, followed by discussions on preventive treatment before returning to the topic of curative treatment and then again to preventive measures (Ibnu Qayyim, 2013).

Infact, upon closer examination of the works of these early scholars on prophetic medicine, it becomes apparent that while they did not explicitly define its topics, they did address specific themes within their writings. Therefore, for those interested in delving into this field, it is imperative to closely scrutinize their texts to identify the implicit topics of prophetic medicine from their perspective. Doing so reveals that there may be recurring themes upon which they unanimously agreed as belonging to the domain of prophetic medicine.

Dimensions of prophetic medications:

According to the contemporary scholar's Prophetic medicine encompasses a range of topics, including preventive and curative aspects, psychological and spiritual dimensions, and ethical considerations. Scholars have categorized prophetic medicine into different topics to facilitate its study and understanding. The categorization of prophetic medicine varies among contemporary scholars. Dr. Abdur Razzak Al-Kilani categorized prophetic medicine into three main topics: a. medical knowledge and its principles in Islam. b. Preventive medicine. c. Curative medicine (Al-Kilani, 1996). Dr. Al-Sayyid Abdul Hakim Abdullah classified prophetic medicine into five sections: a. Preventive prophetic medicine. b. Prophet's commandments on health. c. Curative prophetic medicine. d. psychological treatment. e. Islamic stands on medication (Al-Sayyid, 1998). Dr. Muhammad Ali Al-Bar identified several topics within prophetic medicine: a. Health preservation, promotion, and development. b. Curative prophetic medicine. c. Psychological and spiritual aspects. d. Hadiths on infection and their

faith and medical aspects. e. medical sciences. f. Ethics and laws of the medical profession (Ali al-Bar, 1993). Dr. Hassan Shamsi Al-Basha defined prophetic medicine as encompassing three aspects: a. Curative prophetic medicine. b. Preventive prophetic medicine. c. Matters related to the medical profession (Basha, 2008). Dr. Sa'ad Uddin Mansur simplified prophetic medicine to two topics: a. Curative medicine. b. Preventive medicine. On the other hand (Mansur, 2011). Dr. Abdul Majid Nusayr focused solely on curative prophetic medicine, emphasizing the Prophet's guidance on medication and treatment (Nusayr, 2017). Infact, the most contemporary scholars agree on the importance of two significant topics in prophetic medicine: preventive prophetic medicine and curative prophetic medicine. These topics receive equal attention in their writings, distinguishing contemporary views from early scholars who primarily emphasized curative medicine.

Explanation of some important Dimensions:

1. Ethical principles:

Prophetic medicine encompasses the ethical principles and legal considerations that govern medical practice. Several examples illustrate these principles:

The hadith that states, "Allah 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 Daud, 2009). This hadith underscores an essential ethical aspect of prophetic medicine, namely the prohibition of using forbidden substances in medical treatments. Al-Azim Abadi further expounds that this prohibition extends to the avoidance of intoxicants as medication and refraining from using forbidden substances unnecessarily (Al-Azim Abadi, 2005).

A well-known hadith involving Al-Rabi' bint Mu'adh, where she recounted, "We were in the company of the Prophet SAW, providing the wounded with water, treating them, and bringing the killed to Madinah from the battlefield" (Al-Bukhari, 2002). This hadith highlights another facet of the ethics of prophetic medicine: the permissibility for women to administer medical treatment to wounded men out of necessity. According to Ibnu Hajar It emphasizes that, in certain situations, medical care takes precedence over gender considerations (Ibnu Hajar, 2013).

The hadith that states, "Anyone who practices medicine although he is not known to have learned medicine is liable (to compensate any damage)" (Abu Daud, 2009). This hadith carries a crucial ethical message within the realm of prophetic medicine – the responsibility of healthcare practitioners. It emphasizes that those who engage in medical practice must possess the necessary knowledge and skills. Furthermore, they are ethically bound to take responsibility for any harm caused while treating the sick. Al-Khattabi's interpretation underscores the consensus that healthcare providers should be held accountable for any errors that result in harm to patients (Al-Azim Abadi, 2005).

These examples from prophetic medicine exemplify the ethical and legal principles guiding medical practice within this tradition. They underscore the importance of adhering to ethical standards, avoiding forbidden substances, addressing medical needs based on necessity rather than gender, and assuming responsibility for patient care, ensuring the well-being and safety of those seeking medical treatment.

2. Preventive Medications

It comprises a collection of guidance from the Prophet Muhammad aimed at safeguarding human health by pre-emptively eliminating the causes of diseases. It also encompasses

measures to protect individuals from contagious diseases and to prevent their spread. Several illustrative instances bellow:

The hadith where the Prophet approved of Salman's counsel to Abu Al-Darda, advising him, "Your Lord has a right on you, your soul has a right on you, and your family has a right on you; so, you should give the rights of all those who have a right on you" (Al-Bukhari, 2002). This hadith underscores the paramount importance of preserving one's health and well-being before the onset of detrimental diseases. Dr. Abdur-Razzaq Al-Kilani explicates this guidance as an exhortation for the ummah (community) to maintain physical strength, readiness for emergencies, and avoidance of self-harm (Al-Kilani, 1996). A strong believer is esteemed by Allah, and balance in activities, including nighttime prayers and rest, is emphasized.

The hadith that states, "Were it not too difficult for my ummah, I would have commanded them to use the tooth stick at every time of prayer" (Al-Bukhari, 2002). Dr. Al-Nasimi noted that Modern medicine corroborates the significance of oral hygiene in preventing mouth-related diseases and the spread of harmful microorganisms. Neglecting oral cleanliness can lead to foul breath, gum and tooth problems, and even inflammation of the tonsils and pharynx (Al-Nasimi, 1987).

The hadith that admonishes, "None of you should urinate into standing water which does not flow and then perform ghusl (bathe) with it"(Al-Bukhari, 2002). This guidance advises against using stagnant water, which may carry plagues and communicable diseases. Dr. Ahmad Shawqi Al-Fanjari highlights that many diseases like cholera, typhoid, polio, and infectious hepatitis can be transmitted through water, particularly stagnant water found in small canals and wells. Scientifically, stagnant water provides an ideal environment for the reproduction of microbes and parasitic worm eggs such as bilharzia (Al-Fanjari, 1991).

These instances exemplify the Prophet's teachings on preventive healthcare measures, emphasizing the importance of personal well-being, oral hygiene, and vigilance in water sources to avoid the potential spread of diseases. Prophetic medicine not only provides spiritual guidance but also aligns with modern medical principles, promoting a holistic approach to health and wellness.

3. Curative Methods

This subject encompasses the therapeutic approaches employed by the Messenger (PBUH) to address diseases once they have manifested, with the aim of either complete eradication or the reduction of their severity. Numerous hadiths provide insights into these methods, and a few examples include:

The hadith concerning the treatment of fever: "Fever is from the heat of the (Hell) fire, so cool it with water"(Al-Bukhari, 2002). This hadith unequivocally illustrates the Prophet's practice of treating fever by using water to alleviate its symptoms.

The hadith extolling the benefits of black seed (habbat al-sawda`): "Use this black seed, for indeed it contains a cure for every disease except al-sam (death)" (Al-Tirmidhi,1975). This hadith references specific foods or remedies used in the treatment process, falling under the purview of curative medicine. The hadith on cupping: "The best treatment for you is cupping..." (Ibnu Hanbal, 2001). This statement highlights one of the prophetic methods of treatment, namely, the practice of cupping therapy.

The hadith pertaining to the treatment of sciatica (lumbar pain): "The cure for sciatica is the fat from the tail of a Bedouin sheep (or wild sheep), which should be melted and divided into three parts, one part to be taken each day on an empty stomach" (Ibnu Majah,1998). In this

hadith, there is an explicit reference to the consumption of specific foods or medicines as part of the therapeutic regimen for addressing this ailment.

These examples showcase the Prophet's approach to healing, which involves the use of various remedies and treatments to alleviate or eliminate diseases once they have manifested. Prophetic medicine encompasses not only preventative measures but also a comprehensive approach to managing illnesses through the utilization of natural remedies and therapeutic interventions.

4. Psycho & Spiritual Therapy

Prophetic medicine encompasses the prevention and treatment of psychological and spiritual afflictions, including conditions like anxiety, hypocrisy, envy, as well as treatment for ailments like al-sihr (sorcery) and al-'ayn (the evil eye). It also encompasses the use of permissible ruqyah (spiritual healing) and addresses common errors in its practice. Several examples illustrate these principles:

A hadith related to al-'ayn, where Aishah R.A narrates, "The man casting al-'ayn would be commanded to perform ablution, and then the man affected was washed with it" (Abu Daud, 2009). This hadith pertains to the spiritual ailment of al-'ayn and its treatment.

The hadith that advises, "Whoever among you is able to marry, let him marry, and whoever is not able to do so, he must fast, for it will diminish his desire" (Al-Bukhari, 2002). This guidance from the Prophet addresses the psychological illness of excessive affection and provides a remedy through lawful means. Ibnu Qayyim al-Jawziyyah elaborates that if a person has a lawful way to fulfil their affections, it can serve as a cure for such psychological struggles (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, 2013).

Prophetic guidance on permissible ruqyah and authentic supplications, such as the ruqyah of Jibril to the Prophet: "In the name of God, I am applying a charm to you from everything that may harm you, from the evil of every evil eye, or the eye of an envious one. God heals you. In the name of God, I am applying a charm to you." Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah also suggests that this ruqyah can be employed to treat al-'ayn. Similarly, in the hadith of 'Uthman bin Abi Al-'As, where he complained of bodily pain since embracing Islam, the Prophet instructed him to recite specific supplications for healing, emphasizing seeking refuge in Allah from harm (Muslim, 2006).

These examples exemplify the Prophet's guidance on the prevention and treatment of psychological and spiritual maladies, as well as the utilization of permissible spiritual remedies. Prophetic medicine advocates a holistic approach to health, addressing not only physical ailments but also psychological and spiritual well-being, emphasizing the importance of lawful and faith-based practices in the pursuit of healing and wellness.

Conclusion

Prophetic medicine comprises a collection of guidance from the Prophet Muhammad aimed at safeguarding human health by pre-emptively eliminating the causes of diseases. It also encompasses measures to protect individuals from contagious diseases and to prevent their spread.

Early and contemporary scholars are in agreement regarding the contents of prophetic medicine, but their distinctions lie in the categorization of these contents based on their relevance. Additionally, early scholars seem to have placed a greater emphasis on the subject of curative medicine, unlike their modern counterparts who addressed all topics equally without favoring one over the others. It is worth noting that figures such as Ibnu Qayyim Al-

Jawziyyah and many of the early scholars did not provide explicit delineations of prophetic medicine topics in their writings. In contrast, contemporary scholars like Dr. Al-Nasimi and their peers have clearly specified the prophetic medicine topics, either at the outset of their works or within their definitions of prophetic medicine.

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