

Therapeutic Ethics in Imam Ali's (pbuh) School of Thought

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Just as the human body needs to be kept healthy and in inflicted by diseases, human soul also needs attention when the body suffers from mental and moral diseases. In Imam Ali's point of view, preventing diseases is important for physical health, but more important than physical illness is the spiritual illness that travels painlessly and quietly. The purpose of this study is to investigate the therapeutic ethics of Imam Ali's statements based on Nahj al-Balagha.

Methods: This study is analytical/library-based and analyzes the key words like moral maladies, physical maladies, and spiritual maladies in Imam Ali's statements in Nahj al-Balagha, interpretations of Nahj al-Balagha, and narrative books related to Imam's words, like Tuhaf al-Uqul, Exalted aphorisms and Pearls of Speech, Uyoun Al-Hakam and Al-Mavaez. The authors have not reported any conflicts of interest.

Results: The findings indicate that in Imam Ali's point of view, along with physical illnesses, moral and spiritual illnesses also make man ill and that this type of disease is even worse than physical illness; ethical models, the sense of the presence of the Righteous in life, and the use of divine revelations, revive the patient's sense of hope and optimism.

Conclusion: By examining Imam Ali's words in Nahj al-Balagha and other related narrative books, it found that human is a creature with both a material and immaterial nature and his perfection depends on spiritual development and acquisition of moral virtues. It was also found that in addition to physical illnesses, moral illnesses can also be treated and that Imam has been paying more attention to the moral dimension than the physical dimension, and most of his statements have been in line with the treatment of illnesses related to human's moral dimension.



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Summary

Background and Objective

One of the issues highlighted in Imam Ali's statements, especially in Nahj al-Balagha, is the diseases that threaten human physical and mental health. Imam Ali in his remarks, while pointing out the etiologic aspects of physical and mental illnesses, also provides a remedial prescription.

Therapeutic ethics is a humanistic term that emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In therapeutic ethics, by instructing proper behavior and giving examples of good behavior to the patient, his or her moral or conscience sense is influenced (1). Imam Ali regards human being as a two-dimensional being and considers his or her integrity to be based on spiritual evolution and the acquisition of superior human qualities (2). This review study tries to answer this substantial

question "are moral and spiritual maladies curable?". What is the best approach to curing this kind of disease in Imam Ali's words? This study presupposes that as the physical maladies are curable, the spiritual and moral maladies need a substantial cure too.

Methods

This is an analytical/library-based study. It analyzes the key words like moral maladies, physical maladies, and spiritual maladies in Imam Ali's words in Nahj al-Balagha, interpretations of Nahj al-Balagha, and narrative books related to Imam's statements like Tuhaf al-Uqul, Exalted aphorisms and Pearls of Speech, Uyoun Al-Hakam and Al-Mavaez. The authors of the present study did not report any conflicts of interest.

Results

1. Epidemiology of diseases

Imam Ali divides diseases into two categories: physical and spiritual, and pointing to the reduction and forgiveness of sins due to physical illness (3), he recommends that we not seek medical and remedial cure immediately after you get into a physical illness and leave the treatment of small diseases to the body's immune system. The second type is spiritual illness that is far more severe and worse than physical illness because the patient only thinks of the blessings and opportunities, the benefits and the enjoyments. It is obvious that the disease spreads from the hearts to the personalities and the souls, to the senses, to the thoughts and to the relationships (4).

2. Etiology of Disease

Naraqī regards the diseases of the soul as the deviations of morality from moderation and he believes that human forces are enclosed in three forces of distinction, rage, and lust; and diseases of any force are either due to under indulge or overindulge (going to extremes) or weakness/frailty and its qualities (5). The essential cause of human illnesses is ideational ignorance and motivational insipience because a man obsessed with the ideational ignorance always walks in illusion and a man engaged in motivational insipience gets in the swamp of lust and rage. Since the sick person is plagued by under indulge or overindulge and the outflow of moderation in attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and faiths, deviates the human being from path of servitude to God and increases the severity of his/her illness, a "periodic doctor" not only needs to prescribe medication based on the type of the disease and malady but also should not be satisfied with patients' self-referral to him for

medication and should go out and look for patients himself.

3. Therapeutics of diseases

Besides introducing moral patterns, Imam Ali makes some points.

A. Man's spiritual and sensual illnesses are due to distancing oneself from God or dimness of God's presence in life. Therefore, Imam Ali always mentions piety, continence, and the feeling of presence of God. "O people, fear Allah for man has not been created for naught so that he may waste himself, nor has he been left uncared for so that he may commit nonsensical acts (6)".

B. In Imam's school of thought, the Qur'an is also a cure for moral and ideological illnesses, besides being therapy for the physical illnesses (7). The Qur'an is a healing medicine that heals the heart's wounds with evangelical verses and with warning verses cauterizing untreatable wounds. So, Imam said: Learn the Qur'an, which is the best of words, and understand it to be good, that is the spring of hearts. You will seek healing and curing from its light, which heals the sick hearts (8).

Models play an important role in shaping the essence and personality and morality of human. Aristotle believed that we trust the much more comprehensive and indifferent good men than others (9) because one observes the behavior of the model person, he or she shapes his or her moral life and seeks to implement ethical recommendations. In Imam's opinion, the model therapy is one of the therapeutic methods for treatment of moral and spiritual diseases. Therefore, in sermon 160, he said: There is sufficient guidance in the life of the Messenger of God, and he is a good guide in helping you to understand the ugliness of the world and its abundant scandals and evils. The most beloved servants in the presence of God are those who follow His Prophet and step in his footsteps.

Conclusion

After the analysis of Imam Ali's statements in Nahj al-Balagha and related narrative books, it turns out that, in Imam's viewpoint, humans have two dimensions, namely materialistic and spiritual. As there was no stand-alone literature found on the subject of moral cures in Imam's view, the present study provides a presupposition of cures for moral and spiritual maladies in Imam Ali's viewpoint. It is believed that this presupposition is correct and in Imam's system of thinking humans encounter two types of maladies. Also, it is believed that moral and spiritual maladies are more serious than physical maladies

because the former can be transferred from one's heart to personality, self, wisdom, evaluation, relationships, and attitude. Imam Ali denounced under indulgence or overindulgence and the deviation from moderation, in the treatment of physical and spiritual illnesses, he considers attention and resorting to God and the presence of the Righteous in life as an important factor in the protection from moral illnesses. Imam Ali considers the Qur'an as a healing medicine, and gives model therapy a special position in the treatment of moral and spiritual illnesses. So Imam Ali describes the life conduct of the Prophet and other prophets in Nahj al-Balagha repeatedly and he urges followers to heal their moral illnesses by being inspired by and following their life conduct and fostering a sense of hope and a sense of optimism.

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Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest was reported regarding this research.

Authors' contribution

All the authors have participated in all stages of writing the article.

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الأخلاق العلاجية في المنظومة الفكرية للإمام علي (ع) بمحورية نهج البلاغة

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الملخص

خلفية البحث وأهدافه: كما أن جسم الإنسان يحتاج للسلامة ويتعرض للمرض، فإن روحه أيضاً تحتاج إلى المراقبة فهي كالجسم تتعرض للأمراض النفسية والأخلاقية. ومن منظور الإمام علي (ع) فإن الوقاية من الأمراض لها أهميتها في سلامة الجسم، ولكن الأهم من الأمراض البدنية هي الأمراض النفسية التي تصيب الإنسان بدون ألم وليس لها صوت أو ضجيج. ومن هنا، فإن الهدف من هذه الدراسة مطالعة الأخلاق العلاجية في كلمات الإمام علي (ع) بمحورية نهج البلاغة.

منهجية البحث: تعتبر هذه الدراسة من النوع التحليلي-المكتبي حيث قامت بالتحقيق في الكلمات المفتاحية: الأمراض الأخلاقية، والأمراض البدنية، والأمراض النفسية والروحية؛ وذلك في كلمات الإمام علي (ع) في نهج البلاغة وشروح نهج البلاغة والكتب الروائية المرتبطة بكلمات الإمام مثل تحف العقول وغرر الحكم ودرر الكلم، وعبون الحكم والمواعظ... في المنظومة الفكرية للإمام علي (ع). ولم يلحظ مؤلفو المقالة أي تضارب للمصالح.

الكشوفات: تشير المعطيات إلى أنه من منظار الإمام علي (ع) فإن الإنسان يُصاب بالأمراض الأخلاقية والنفسية أيضاً إلى جانب إصابته بالأمراض البدنية. وأن هذا النوع من المرض يعتبر أسوأ من المرض البدني. وأن القدوة الأخلاقية وإحساس حضور الله في الحياة والتنعم بالآيات الإلهية يؤثر في إحياء شعور الأمل والنظرة الإيجابية عند المريض.

الاستنتاج: من خلال دراسة كلمات الإمام علي (ع) في نهج البلاغة وسائر الكتب الروائية المتعلقة بالموضوع فقد تبين أن الإنسان موجود له بُعد وراء مادي مضافاً إلى بُعد المادي، وأن كماله منوط بالتكامل الروحي وكسب الفضائل الأخلاقية. وقد تبين أن الأمراض الأخلاقية أيضاً قابلة للعلاج. وأنه عليه السلام يهتم بالبُعد الأخلاقي أكثر من اهتمامه بالأبعاد البدنية، وأن أغلب كلماته عليه السلام كانت تهدف إلى معالجة البُعد الأخلاقي للإنسان.

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اخلاق درمانی در منظومه فکری امام علی (ع) با محوریت نهج البلاغه

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نهج البلاغه

چکیده

سابقه و هدف: همان‌طور که جسم انسان به سلامتی نیاز دارد و گرفتار بیماری می‌شود، روح او نیز به مراقبت نیازمند است و همچون جسم گرفتار امراض نفسانی و اخلاقی می‌شود. در نگاه امام علی (ع) پیشگیری از بیماری در سلامت جسم حائز اهمیت است؛ اما آنچه از بیماری جسمانی مهم‌تر است، امراض روحانی است که بی درد و بدون سر و صدا انسان را گرفتار می‌کند. از این‌رو، هدف این پژوهش بررسی اخلاق درمانی در بیانات امام علی (ع) با محوریت نهج البلاغه بود.

روش کار: این پژوهش از نوع تحلیلی-کتابخانه‌ای است که کلیدواژه‌های بیماری اخلاقی، بیماری جسمی و بیماری نفسانی و روحانی در سخنان امام علی (ع) در نهج البلاغه، شروح نهج البلاغه و کتب روایی مرتبط با فرمایش‌های امام همچون تحف العقول، غرر الحکم و درر الکلم، عیون الحکم و المواعظ ... در منظومه فکری امام علی (ع) بررسی شده است. مؤلفان مقاله هیچ‌گونه تضاد منافی گزارش نکرده‌اند.

یافته‌ها: یافته‌ها نشان داده که در نگاه امام علی (ع) در کنار بیماری‌های جسمانی، امراض اخلاقی و روحانی نیز انسان را بیمار می‌کند و این نوع بیماری بدتر از بیماری جسمانی است و الگوهای اخلاقی، احساس حضور حضرت حق در زندگی و بهره‌گیری از آیات الهی، حس امیدواری و خوش‌بینی را در بیمار زنده می‌کند.

نتیجه‌گیری: با بررسی سخنان امام علی (ع) در نهج البلاغه و دیگر کتب روایی مرتبط، مشخص شد انسان موجودی است که هم ساحت مادی و هم فرامادی دارد و کمالش در گرو تکامل روحانی و کسب فضایل اخلاقی است. همچنین مشخص شد در کنار بیماری‌های جسمانی، بیماری‌های اخلاقی نیز درمان‌شدنی است و حضرت به بُعد اخلاقی بیش از ابعاد جسمانی توجه داشته‌اند و بیشتر بیانات ایشان در جهت درمان بُعد اخلاقی انسان بوده است.

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