



Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah & Islāmīc Psychology

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Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah is one of the flag bearers of Islāmic psychology, though mainstream Islāmic psychologists today do not recognise him as one of the forerunners of the field. Perhaps this is due to his different school of thought belonging to the *Athārī Salafī* tradition in contrast to Al-Ghazālī and others who were known by their *Sūfī Ash'arī* tradition.

Ibn Qayyim had rightly identified the relation between the physical and spiritual ailments. He has contributed both in the fields of spiritual and physical health. Therefore, it would be unjust not to give him a credit for his famous contribution in form of his treatise on Prophetic Medicine.

However, in comparison to the cure for physical diseases, he has greatly emphasised on the cure of psycho-spiritual diseases especially those that relate to the heart. According to Ibn Qayyim, focusing only on the betterment of one's physical condition while neglecting one's heart does not benefit an individual in terms of his health. However, in case where the heart is given attention and the physical health is compromised, the harm is definitely caused but that is bearable (Ibn Qayyim, 1418 AH, p.100). The idea that the psycho-spiritual wellbeing of an individual precedes his physical wellbeing is based on the Prophetic Hadīth that prophesised a three-year long global famine just before the emergence of the anti-Christ. The Prophet () was asked about the survival of humanity to which he responded that remembrance of Allāh (Dhikr) will satisfy their bodily needs (Albānī, 1408).

Hence, Ibn Qayyim based his idea on his understanding of the heart. The example that he uses for the heart is that of a king who ensures his dominion over his subjects and his armies. The heart commands the limbs, and they obey. Therefore, the rectitude and the deviation of all depends on the soundness and the deviation of the heart (Ibn Qayyim, *Ighāthah al-Lahfān*, p.05).

Source: Rassool & Luqman (2022). Foundations of Islāmīc Psychology (Routledge).

