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An article written by

Yasin Fox

How is your heart doing?

Introduction

The last messenger of Allaah Most High is reported to have said:
“Surely there is in the body a small piece of flesh; if it is good, the whole body is good, and if it is corrupted, the whole body is corrupted, and that is surely the heart”
(Bukhari)

Verily Allaah Most High mentions, in His Quraan, the heart 168 times!

On the subject of hearts few are knowledgeable, and I am certainly not one of them. I ask Allaah to open up my heart for me and to reveal the contents therein to me and to remove therefrom that which is displeasing to Him and to replace it with that with which He is pleased. And I ask Allaah to show me that which He is pleased with therein and to increase me in that, that perchance I may grow in grace. Ameen. May Allaah bestow the answer to this invocation upon all of His believing creation past present and future. Ameen

Oh people who believe and oh people who want to believe undoubtedly your heart is the fulcrum of your thoughts. The subject matter of this article came to me one day and in haste I wrote it down that it may not be lost. Indeed the manner of my articulation is weak, however my intention is strong. Look to the intention behind these words and take them to your own heart and make effort not to fall prey to the deception that has ensnared so many of our contemporaries. You need to take the very best care of yourself for indeed your body is a trust! Allaah Most High will be receiving you back to Him and how will you present yourself to Him? Will you say, "Oh my Lord I stand before you and here is my body that you made for me to travel through the world. I give it back to you now. It is worn out for your service. Accept my deeds my Lord and forgive me my short-comings and have mercy on my soul for indeed it was you who I sought with my mind and my body and my soul" Or will we stand before our Lord in an awful condition? How will we speak before our Lord when we know that we destroyed our bodies with haraam? Oh people! smoking is haraam. Impure food is haraam? Riba is haraam? Obesity is a disgrace! Anxiety has no place in Islaam "Allaah is sufficient for me, there is no god but Allaah... (Hasbiyallaahu laa eela ha eelallah) Your body is an amaanat! You have to give it back in the condition it was lent you. Oh people! Read this article and change your lives. Learn to understand yourselves and find your way back to Allaah Most High in the best most dignified manner.

How is your heart doing?

- Heart disease is the most common cause of death in the UK
- 198,000 deaths per year
- 1 in 3 people die from heart disease
- 1 in 5 men and 1 in 7 women die from heart disease

Source: The British Heart Foundation 2008

“And of mankind are some who say: We believe in God and the Last Day, when they believe not. They think to beguile God and those who believe, and they beguile none save themselves; but they perceive not in their hearts is a disease and God increases their disease. A painful doom is theirs because they lie, and when it is said unto them.

Make not mischief in the earth, they say: We are peacemakers only. Are not they indeed the mischief makers? But they perceive not.”

Chapter 2 “The Cow” verses 8 – 12; The Holy Qur’an

- Heart disease is the main cause of death in Europe
- 4.3 Million deaths per year in Europe

- 2 Million deaths per year in the EU
- 48% of people per year in Europe die from heart disease
- 42% of people per year in the EU die from heart disease
- Heart disease is the main cause of death amongst women in all European countries

Source: The British Heart Foundation 2008

“Never sent We a messenger or a Prophet before you but when He recited (the message) Satan proposed (opposition) in respect of that which he recited thereof. But God abolishes that which Satan proposes. Then God establishes His revelations. God is Knower, Wise; that He may make that which the devil proposes a temptation for those in whose hearts is a disease, and those whose hearts are hardened Lo! The evil doers are in open schism. And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it is the truth from your Lord, so that they may believe therein and their hearts may submit humbly unto Him. Lo! God verily is guiding those who believe unto a right path”

Chapter 22 “The Pilgrimage” verses 52 – 54: The Holy Qur’an

- Heart disease is the main cause of death in the United States
- In 2006 80 Million people were diagnosed with heart disease in the United States
- 7,1 Million were admitted to hospital of which 865,000 died
- 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women in the USA at age 40 remain at risk of heart disease
- 1 in 2 men and women in the USA at age 70 remain at risk of heart disease

Source: America Heart Association

“Verily We have sent down revelations and explained them. God guides whom He will unto a straight path. And they say: We believe in God and the messenger, and we obey; then after that factions of them turn away. Such are not believers. And when they appeal unto God and His messenger to judge between them, lo! A faction of them are averse; But if right had been with them they would have come unto him willingly. Is there in their hearts a disease, or have they doubts, or fear they lest Allah and His messenger should wrong them

Chapter 24 “The Light” verses 46 - 50: The Holy Qur’an

There are two main reasons that people suffer from heart disease.

1. They have no spiritual connection with God
2. They do not take care of their bodies

In the first instance people who have no connection with God will no doubt be of those who do not follow His divine guidance; which leads to the second problem in that they do not take heed of His recommendations about how to take care of their bodies. The human soul does not come from this world. The human soul comes from the place where God created the first man Adam (*peace be upon him*). Before God created Adam (*peace be upon him*) He created his soul. He also created the soul of every human being that ever was and ever will be. After God created all the souls, He gathered them all billions of them before Him and addressed them thus:

“And (remember) when Your Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed (or from Adam's loin his offspring) and made them testify as to themselves (saying): “Am I not Your Lord?” they said: “Yes! We testify,” lest you should Say on the Day of Resurrection: “Verily, we have been unaware of this.”

Chapter 7 “The Heights” verse 172: The Holy Qur’an

Every human being has a natural inbuilt remembrance and connection with God, but something happens during the transfer of the soul from the heaven into the womb of the mother and finally

from the mother's womb into the world. The distress of the emergence causes the soul somehow to forget the meeting that it had with God. That is why He is constantly sending reminders to us. He understands that we are forgetful and He is Compassionate and Merciful therefore he says:

**“Now We have revealed unto you a Scripture wherein is your
Reminder.**

Have ye then no sense?”

Chapter 21 “The Prophets” verse 10: The Holy Qur’an

“By the Scripture that makes plain

**Lo! We revealed it on a blessed night. Lo! We are ever warning.
Whereupon every wise command is made clear as a command from
Our presence.**

**Lo! We are ever sending. A mercy from your Lord. Lo! He is the
Hearer, the Knower, Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is
between them, if ye would be sure”**

Chapter 44 “The Smoke” verses 2 – 6: The Holy Qur’an

A point that I would like to bring up and explain at this moment is that quite frequently people query the use of the word “We” in the Holy Qur’an i.e. “We have revealed...” & “We are ever sending....” etc. God is the commanding sovereign over all of His creation, however there are some of His creation who are in His service and they carry out certain tasks and duties for example the angel Gabriel (*peace be upon him*) is charged with carrying revelation and instruction from God unto the Prophets and the Prophets (*peace and blessings be upon them*) are charged with bringing the revelations and instructions to the people. In the sense that God and the angels and the prophets are all involved in the guidance of mankind so thus does God use the “We” word like a “royal we” i.e. Me and my kingdom and my bondsmen. It is important to understand this as some people have shown confusion regarding this matter and they have not sought the proper explanation, but instead they have assumed that God is more than one and they have opened up the doors to polytheism. Islaam is unadulterated monotheism and must be understood in that context at all times.

Every person knows about Adam and Noah and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Joseph and Moses and John the Baptist and Jesus son of Mary and Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon them all*). The Old Testament and The Psalms of David and The New Testament and The Holy Qur'an are not secret books or scriptures. In fact none of these people or the scriptures that I have mentioned here is hidden from anyone. The knowledge is available to all of humankind if they have the hearts and the minds to learn to understand the facts of their existence. However humankind has become so engrossed in their attempts to acquire as much of worldly wealth as possible that they have lost focus on the reality and when they are reminded of the realities of life they say:

“That, when Our revelations are recited unto him, he says: Mere fables of the men of old”

Chapter 68 “The Pen” verse 15: The Holy Qur'an

The result of peoples disregard for the scriptures is that they have brought themselves onto the precipice of heart disease and are throwing themselves off it and into pain and distress and depression and ultimately an early grave. The very act of disbelieving in God causes the heart to die and the very act of not following His guidance on how to live our lives causes the heart to die. According to my research a soul doesn't last much beyond 40 years without a spiritual connection with God before it starts to wither and die. Imagine a flower in the ground. The roots absorb nutrients from the earth and the flower lives and blossoms. Imagine a cut flower in a bouquet. The flower can only live for a short while before it begins to die as it is cut off from its source of life i.e. the earth. In like manner we humans are like flowers. If we believe in God and we follow His guidance then we are like the flower in the earth and we grow, but if we disbelieve in Him and we ignore His guidance then we are like the cut flower and we wilt.

One of the foremost experts in psychology of our time, Dr Carl Jung, mentioned on page 264 of his book "The modern man in search of spirit":

“Over the last 30 years, people from all over the world have come to me seeking advice. I treated hundreds of patients and most of them were middle-aged or more than 35 years old. The problem with every one of them returned to one issue - seeking refuge in religion, and by doing so, being able to have a perspective or outlook on life. I can reasonably say that every one of them had become sick because they missed out on that which religion has to offer to the believer.
And the one who does not develop a true faith cannot be healed”

The heart functions in two dimensions namely the physical and the spiritual. Both the physical and the spiritual dimensions need to be kept pure. If the spiritual dimension is tainted with disbelief or polytheism the heart will not survive long before depression sets in. If the physical dimension is not maintained then the heart will not survive long before it starts to malfunction. Let us deal with the spiritual heart first and then the physical heart afterwards

The spiritual heart.

Like the flower draws nutrients from the earth so too does the heart need to be connected with God. The flower takes nutrients from the earth and the heart is sustained from the Creator's sustaining power. It is said that our souls reside in our hearts and in truth our souls are who we essentially are. When we die the body will become as dust, but the soul lives on for eternity. God created for us vehicles for our souls and the driving seat is our hearts. Our very being functions around the heart. A person can lose a kidney or a leg or part of the brain or an ear or an eye and yet they will still live, but if the heart is damaged we die. The heart is the centre of our life and it is the most vital part of our being and in it lives our soul. Did you see your ribs? Look how the ribs are curved to make them extra strong and see how the ribcage has been designed to house and support and protect the heart and the lungs. Verily when God created man He fashioned him in the best of forms and look how we treat ourselves! We do not take the care or the time to investigate our histories. We do not care to listen to the soulful murmuring of the heart as it constantly reminds us by way of our consciences that in fact there is more to this life than what we can see. Do we imagine that by forging a relationship with God that we are in some way benefitting Him or others around us? It is not so. The beneficiary is ourselves for but believing in Him and by obeying Him we step from the exposed darkness of the difficult anxious life into the protected light of the peaceful life. Come what may, but with faith comes understanding and the understanding of life is one of the gifts that God bestows upon those who believe in Him. Do you wonder why your hearts are so disharmonised? Definitely the difficulties and injustices of this life are impossible to understand without the guidance of knowledge

that can be found in the scriptures. For the heart to discover spiritual peace it is fundamentally necessary that a person have a complete and full understanding of their situation in life. The foundation of understanding is in the complete and sincere answering of these three questions:

1. Where do I come from?
2. Where am I going?
3. What am I supposed to be doing with my life?

If you cannot answer these questions then you may as well consider yourself amongst the living dead for your life has absolutely no real purpose and your heart will become depressed and you will suffer and die. Why do you think so many people turn to alcohol and drugs? They are tranquilisers for the heart. The poor little heart is crying out for relief of the depression that is causing a degeneration of the soul, but you aren't listening to it. Instead you absorb yourself in television and music and you try to find happiness in fulfilling your primal desires, but the truth is that when you are sober and alone and you think deeply about things you realise that you are not happy and all the things that you take and the things that you do to quieten your crying heart offer only a temporary relief. Sooner or later your conscience reminds you that there is more to life than what the eye can see, but are you listening? If you don't listen and take heed to the warnings and the reminders that emanate from within yourself and from without yourself then you will surely most definitely without a shadow of a doubt become one of the statistics. I invite you with the following message that was given by Rab'i bin 'Amir (*may God be pleased with him*) a companion of the prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*) to the commander in chief of the Persian army; Rustum:

"God (the Almighty) has sent us so that we may liberate our fellow human beings from their subservience to other human beings and to bring them to the obedience of The One True God. We are here to take them from the narrowness of this world to the spaciousness of the hereafter. Our aim is to free them of the persecution perpetrated against them by other religions. We want to bless them with the justice and equity of Islaam."

If you are confused. If you are lost. If you are teetering on the brink of belief or disbelief. If you are weak or if you are strong. If you are old or if you are young. Whether you be a man or a woman or a child. Whatever your race. Whatever your blessed and fine colour. Whichever religion you follow or do not follow. If you are looking for the righteous guidance through this life then I suggest to you the following:

With clean water wash your face, and your hands up to the elbows, and lightly rub your head and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. And if you are unclean, purify yourself by taking a bath. Then in your own time and in a place of privacy lower yourself with humility and dignity onto your knees and bow your head and remember God. Remember His favours upon you. How He has fed you and clothed you and cared for you and think about the situation of those who are less fortunate than you. Reflect and ponder and take the time to consider deeply who you are and what you are doing with your life and where you are going to. Then call upon God, the God who created Adam and Abraham (*peace be upon them both*). And say the following:

Oh my Lord Who has created me from nothing,
and who has taken care of all my affairs in the world.
Oh my Lord I have wronged myself so I ask you for your forgiveness.
I call upon You for You are the Originator of history and destiny and
I ask You for Your guidance and for Your forgiveness for there is
none who can guide but You and there is none who can forgive but
You and You are the best of those who show mercy.
Oh my Lord grant me knowledge and wisdom and understanding
that I may worship You as is your right for you are our
Lord and Creator and Sustainer and none should be worshipped but
You.
Ameen

God willing if you offer this prayer in humility and with sincerity it
will be answered and you will find that your heart will become light
and your mind will open and you will begin the journey of learning
to understand and you will be of those who are drawn near unto
God.

The physical heart

Coronary heart disease is caused by atherosclerosis which is the narrowing of the coronary arteries due to fatty build ups of plaque. It's likely to produce angina pectoris (chest pain), heart attack or both. Some argue that heart disease is caused purely by poor eating and living habits and that God has nothing to do with it for God does not exist. Actually they are half correct for it is true that heart disease is caused by poor eating and living habits, but God does exist and if they paid attention to the guidance that He sent us they would see that God has told us how we should eat and how we should live because He made us and He knows best how to maintain us. Regarding food God said:

” O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and wholesome in the earth, and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Lo! he is an open enemy for you. He enjoined upon you only the evil and the foul, and that you should tell concerning God that which you know not”

Chapter 2 “The Cow” verses 168 - 169: The Holy Qur’an

“O you who believe! Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you, and render thanks to God if it is (indeed) He whom you worship. He has forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swine flesh, and that which has been immolated to (the name of) any other than God. But he who is driven by necessity, neither craving nor transgressing,

It is no sin for him. Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful”

Chapter 2 “The Cow” verses 172- 173: The Holy Qur’an

“To hunt and to eat the fish of the sea is made lawful for you, a provision for you and for seafarers; but to hunt on land is forbidden you so long as you are on the pilgrimage. Be mindful of your duty to
God, unto Whom ye will be gathered”

Chapter 5 “The Table spread” verse 96: The Holy Qur’an

“And Lo! In the cattle there is verily a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that, which is in their bellies, and many uses have you in them, and of them do you eat”

Chapter 23 “The Believers” verse 21: The Holy Qur’an

“A token unto them is the dead earth. We revive it, and We bring forth from it grain so that they eat thereof; And We have placed therein gardens of the date palm and grapes, and We have caused springs of water to gush forth therein. That they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hand made it not. Will they not, then, give thanks?”

Chapter 23 “Ya Sin” verses 33 - 35: The Holy Qur’an

“He it is Who hath made the earth subservient unto you, so walk in the paths thereof and eat of His providence. And unto Him will be the resurrection (of the dead)”

Chapter 67 “The Sovereignty” verse 15: The Holy Qur’an

As you can see by the preceding verses God has encouraged us to eat of the pure things like fish and cattle and fresh vegetables and fruit. Pork is absolutely forbidden because pigs are filthy animals, why?

- Pigs eat their own excrement
- Pigs eat their own babies
- Pigs eat Human flesh
- Pigs eat carrion
- In the flesh of pigs is the egg of the measly tapeworm (T. solium). This creature hooks itself onto the inside of the intestines and siphons off food to feed itself. The tapeworm can grow up to 30m long and its presence inside the human body causes much harm and sickness.

Incidentally dog flesh is also forbidden for similar reasons to the pig except dog flesh is classified as slightly less foul as swine flesh! Doctors and scientists are encountering an increase in different types of cancers and brain illnesses. The main causes of these are that people are consuming foul and impure foodstuffs. Did you ever hear the saying?

“You are what you eat”

Everything that we eat becomes a part of us. That bacon rasher that someone ate for breakfast replaced the destroyed brain cells that their smoking and drinking killed! All around us people are heedlessly consuming impure foods and these include those things that have been reared on diets of hormones to make them grow bigger and faster and also there are genetically modified foods that cause only God knows what upsets to the balances of our physical makeup. Eat and drink of the pure things if you want to live a healthy life.

Alcohol consumption needs to be effectively addressed as it is extremely harmful to us, God said about alcohol.

“They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." and they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is beyond your needs." Thus God makes clear to you his laws In order that you may give thought."

Chapter 2 "The Cow" verse 219: The Holy Qur'an

And He also said:

“Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind): If you love God, follow me; God will love you and forgive you your sins. God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Say: Obey God and the messenger.

But if they turn away, Lo! God loves not the disbelievers (in His guidance)”

Chapter 3 “The family of Imraan” verses 31 – 32: The Holy Qur’an

After the Holy Qur’an Muslims follow the sayings (*ahadeeth plural, hadith singular*) of the prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*) as collected in an authentic book compiled by Imaam Bukhari. Inside this collection the following sayings of the prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*) regarding alcohol were recorded.

Narrated by Aisha. When the last verses of the second chapter; The Cow were revealed, Gods apostle went out and recited them in the mosque and prohibited the trade of alcoholic liquors

Volume 6, book 60. Prophetic commentary on the Qur’an hadith no

Narrated by Anas: I will narrate to you a hadith I heard from Gods apostle and none other than I will tell you of it. I heard Gods apostle saying, "From among the signs of the day of judgement are the following: religious knowledge will be taken away; general ignorance in religious matters will increase; illegal sexual intercourse will prevail; drinking of alcoholic drinks will prevail. Men will decrease in number, and women will increase in number so much so that 50 women will be looked after by one man

Volume 7, book 62. Marriage hadith 158

Categorically alcohol has been prohibited by God in The Holy Qur'an and by the prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*). How astonishing is it to see the prophetic hadith is coming true!? Some people think that the prohibition of alcohol is a punishment, but they are very far from wrong. The prohibition is there to protect us. As a mother or a father forbids their children from indulging in that which is detrimental to them so too does God forbid us from indulging in that which is detrimental to us. One need merely peruse the statistics at your local hospital to see how much damage alcohol does to the human body. Alcohol is the single greatest cause of social problems in the home and within the community and a major contributing factor to heart disease. Some people say that a little bit is good for you actually; alcohol bonds with the water in the body and since the water in the body is transferred by means of the blood through every artery, vein and organ so too does the alcohol pass with it and in doing so it strips away essential minerals, compounds and nutrients leaving the arteries, veins and organs exposed to harm and depleted by loss of that which is necessary for their sustenance. It is suggested that a moderate glass of wine has some health benefits, but the benefits are outweighed by the negative effects. In any case the majority of human beings are incapable of moderation and thus it became necessary to forbid the use of alcoholic drinks for the safety of the person and the society. Look around you and see how much alcohol plays an important part in people's lives. Verily there is no benefit to be had no matter how hard those who want use it try to manipulate the facts. Ask the starving orphans in Africa and Asia why you are drinking away money that could feed them! Ask your heart why it

struggles to keep up the beat! It is because of the junk that we are putting inside our bodies. Do you think a Ferrari owner will use sub-standard fuel and oil for his racing machine? So what then is your opinion of the human body? Surely the human body is a far greater machine than a Ferrari. If the Ferraris engine blows up – no problem! Have money will just replace it. What about the millionaire who has brain cancer because of alcohol abuse or the millionairess whose lungs collapsed because of her smoking 20 a day, ask them where they will buy new organs from?

Conclusion

As you can see it is imperative for our success that we take care of our hearts. We need to address the heart issues on the spiritual and physical fronts for our own benefit and for the benefit of our families and dependants who count on us. The changes that need to take place are easy if you just let them happen naturally. Take small steps if you can't endure the big ones. Slowly remove the harm from your life and increase the good things. Be patient in prayer and observe your duties to the Lord your God and those around you who look to you for guidance. Some of the benefits of obedience to God and living healthily as he instructed us are:

- Peace of heart
- Increased mental awareness
- Improved memory
- Increased knowledge and understanding
- Improved physical health and wellbeing

- Increased stamina and endurance
- Consistent temperament
- Improvement of kinship and community relationships
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Reduced costs of living

On a final note I would like to share a few thoughts with you. Scientists say that the narrowing of the channels through which the blood passes is caused by a build up of a kind of plaque. It is my understanding that this build up of plaque in the body can be somewhat removed if we perform two simple acts; which Muslims already do in any case. The first act is the act of prostration (*sajda in Arabic*). When a person prostrates correctly and they place their foreheads on the ground they are in fact, amongst other things, emptying toxins out of the sinuses. The people of the scriptures that came before The Holy Qur'an i.e. the Jewish and the Christian folk were also commanded to prostrate themselves.

God says about prostration.

“They are not all alike. Of the People of the Scripture there is a staunch community who recite the revelations of God in the night season, falling prostrate (before Him)”

Chapter 3 “The family of Imraan” verse 113. The Holy Qur’an

“Triumphant are those who turn repentant to God, those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who fast, these who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and

who forbid the wrong and those who keep the limits (ordained) of
God And give glad tidings to believers!

Chapter 9 "Repentance" verse 112: The Holy Qur'an

Toxins build up in our systems and contribute to the plaque build up that narrows the arteries. Some types of toxins stubbornly remain in the body and need a more intense system than that of emptying the sinuses in prostration and that intense system is fasting. Fasting cleanses the body of toxins and Muslims have been commanded to fast every year in the month of Ramadhaan and God said that fasting was also prescribed for the nations before the Muslims. God says about fasting:

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you,
even as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may ward off
evil)”

Chapter 2 "The Cow" verse 183: The Holy Qur'an

“The month of Ramadhaan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the Guidance and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days. God desires for you ease; He desires not hardship for you; and (He desires) that ye should complete the period, and that ye should magnify God for having guided you, and that peradventure you may be thankful”

Chapter 2 "The Cow" verse 185: The Holy Qur'an

There are many other health benefits that Muslims enjoy and reap the reward of, but that is the subject of, God willing, another article in the near future. For now it serves our purposes to be aware of the things that can harm us and the things that we can do to help prevent ourselves from harm. Every little bit helps. These days we need as much help as we can get. I thank God for guiding me into the fold of Islaam and for giving me the mind to understand and relay some of the things that He has taught me. Whatever good thing is in this article it is from God and whatever bad thing or mistake it is from myself. I ask your forgiveness if anything that I have mentioned has caused you any harm or grief.

May God guide us all towards Him in good works and may He make us grow in wisdom and humility and may He remove from us the hardships of life and ease our way to comfort and peace. .

May God shower His abundant blessings of peace upon you.

Ameeen