

The Prophet's guidance on physical activity

As for the Prophet's guidance while busy and while free, we will mention a part of the Prophet's guidance that will satisfy us that his guidance in this regard was the most perfect.

It is a fact that the body relies on food and drink for its survival. It is also a fact that not all of the food and nourishment is digested when consumed. Rather, a part of it remains, and as time goes by, these substances accumulate in various qualities and quantities in the body. These accumulations harm the body because they cause clogs in different vessels and make the body feel heavy. If one gets rid of these substances by extracting them with medication, the body is harmed because most of these medications are toxic to varying degrees. In fact, the medication extracts the beneficial substances along with the harmful ones. As for the quality of these substances, the body is harmed when they heat up, spoil, become cold or weaken the natural heat and energy from fully maturing the excess substances.

The clogs caused by the residual substances are harmful whether they remain in the body or get extracted. Moving about is one of the best methods to deny these substances the chance to accumulate. Moving heats the organs and dissipates the leftover substances disallowing them from accumulating by the passage of time. The body will also get used to being energetic and light through physical activity and would optimize the intake of food, firm up the joints and strengthen the muscles and the ligaments. Moderate physical activity immunizes the body against most ailments and mood changes, providing the activity is done at the right time and under the proper circumstances.

Physical activity should be practiced after one has digested their food. In addition, moderate physical activity is that which gives the cheeks color and which nourishes the body. As for the activity that causes sweat it is too excessive.

Any organ that is used regularly in a type of physical activity will get stronger, especially during enjoyable sports in which the organ is used. Those who practice sports regularly will strengthen their bodies and those who nourish their memory their memory will get it stronger. Every organ has its own suitable sport or physical activity. For instance, the chest needs recitation, where one should start speaking with a low tone and then increases the volume of his tone. Hearing needs to hear various sounds and voices, gradually from the softer to the louder voices. The tongue needs to speak, and the eye needs to see while the legs need to walk while increasing the pace of walking gradually.

Horse riding, archery, wrestling and running are sports for the whole body. These types of sports dissipate chronic ailments, such as leprosy, dropsy and constipation.

Furthermore, the heart needs a type of sport that entails learning, behaving, and feeling happiness, joy, patience, firmness, courage, forbearing, performing righteous good deeds, and so forth. Patience, love, courage and kindness are among the best types of sports or physical activity for the inner-self. When the heart learns these types of physical activities little by little, these attributes will firmly reside in the heart and will be characteristic of that person.

In short, when you learn the Prophet's guidance in this regard you will realize that it is the most perfect and beneficial and that it preserves good health and the power of the body. It is also beneficial for the worldly affairs and the Next Life.

In addition, there is no doubt that prayer preserves the health of the body and helps dissolve its excess and residual substances. It also preserves faith and brings happiness for this and the Next Life. Standing up in prayer at night also preserves health. Prayer also helps against acute ailments and energizes the body, heart and soul profoundly. In the *Sahihain* it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

« يَعْقِدُ الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَى قَافِيَةِ رَأْسِ أَحَدِكُمْ - إِذَا هُوَ نَامَ - ثَلَاثَ عُقَدٍ، يَضْرِبُ

على كل عقدة: عَلَيْكَ لَيْلٌ طَوِيلٌ فَارْقُدْ. فَإِنْ هُوَ اسْتَيْقَظَ، فَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ انْحَلَّتْ عقدة. فَإِنْ تَوَضَّأَ: انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ ثَانِيَةً. فَإِنْ صَلَّى: انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدُهُ كُلُّهَا، فَاصْبَحَ نَشِيطًا طَيِّبَ النَّفْسِ. وَإِلَّا: أَصْبَحَ خَبِيثَ النَّفْسِ كَسَلَانَ »

"Satan ties three knots at the back of the head of any of you if he is asleep. On every knot he reads and exhales the following words, 'The night is long, so stay asleep.' When one wakes up and remembers Allāh, one knot is undone. When one performs ablution, the second knot is undone. When one prays, the third knot is undone and one gets up energetic with a good heart in the morning. Otherwise one gets up lazy and with a mischievous heart."

The Islamic commandment of Fasting also preserves the health and is a type of physical activity for body and soul. No one whose character is not spoiled could ever deny these facts.

As for *Jihad* and what it entails of various movements and activities, it is one of the best preservers of strength, good health, firmness of the heart and body and extracting unwanted residual substances that accumulate in the body. *Jihad* also helps remove sadness, grief, anguish and depression. Only those who have tasted this cure know these facts. Hajj and performing the rest of its obligations, horseracing, helping other people achieve their needs and rights, visiting the sick, following funerals, walking to the mosque to perform *Jumu'ah* and congregational prayers, performing ablution and taking a bath all have similar effects and benefits.

All the acts that we mentioned will help preserve the health and aid the body towards the healthy passing of liquid and solid wastes. There is an added benefit in these acts as they help acquire the good of this life and the Next Life and fend off harm.

Now, we should realize that the Prophet's guidance in all of this is the best guidance. His guidance is superior regarding the treatment of the heart and the body, preserving their well being and fending off harm from them. There is no more proof for those who have been given the correct guidance than what we have already mentioned. Indeed, all success comes from Allāh Alone.