

PREFACE

Introduction and Importance of the Topic:

What is the primary objective of imparting religious education? This is a question which arises in every research-loving mind, but its satisfactory answer has never been given. The limits of religious education have always been confined to some religious beliefs and rituals, whereas its scope is much broader. A more suitable answer to the question is that the objective of imparting religious education is only the reformation of the society.

The reformation of the society is a grave responsibility on the shoulders of the religious scholars. This is an obligation on those who are associated with Islamic studies to observe the problems of society and give solutions in order to improve the standard of the living of the people. For the researcher the challenging task to study is the misconceptions prevalent in the general and the religious circle in particular. One of such misconceptions is about the spread of infections whose foundation, by mistake, is thought to be the aḥādīth of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Holy Prophet said "*La 'adwā*" (there is no contagious disease) and this saying was misinterpreted as if the Prophet meant that infections could not be transmitted from one person to another person, therefore, people became heedless of infections and started to share their things of use like towels, combs etc. with total disregard to the precautionary measures against infections. As a consequence, the infections spread and epidemics broke out.

The West progressed in the field of medical science, discovered the causes of transmission of infections and studied how diseases became epidemics. Muslims, on the other hand, lagged behind in this field and remained stuck in their orthodox and non-scientific conceptions. The need of hour is to present Islamic conception with scientific reasoning. The instructions that are present in the

ahādīth pertaining to the medical science should be viewed with the medical sources in hand and their significance should be brought to light. This topic is going to serve this purpose and will prove that the concept of contagious disease and epidemic is present in the ahādīth and the instructions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Statement of the Topic:

A sincere effort has been made in this research to investigate the following:

1. Is the concept of contagious disease and epidemic present in the ahādīth?
2. Did the Prophet (peace be upon him) give instructions to prevent the spread of such infections?
3. Were such instructions only temporary or their effectiveness can still be recognized?
4. Can the teaching of the Prophet be called the basis of modern medical research in this regard?
5. Can the medical aspect of the sīrah of the Prophet be emphasized more by the fact that his instructions about the contagious disease and epidemic are still practical?

Hypothesis of the Topic:

Before starting the research, certain preliminary statements were laid down which could be proved in the light of further research as follows:

1. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was fully aware of the concept of contagious disease and epidemics.
2. He was also aware of the underlying causes of such infections.
3. He knew the precautionary measures as well and gave instructions about them.

4. The concept of '*La 'adwā*' has not been viewed deeply and thoroughly in the past resulting in misconceptions.
5. By comparing the ḥādīth '*La 'adwā*' with other aḥādīth related to the topic, this claim would be proved that in the aḥādīth of the Prophet the concept of contagious disease and epidemic is present.

Research Objectives:

The main objectives of this research were:

1. To know what is the concept of '*adwā*' in the aḥādīth.
2. To know what is the concept of '*wabā*' in the aḥādīth.
3. To make an analysis of the sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) related to '*adwā*' and '*wabā*' and to compare them with other aḥādīth on the topic.
4. To analyze the sayings of the scholars of aḥādīth about this topic so that the Islamic viewpoint becomes clear.
5. To judge and compare the Islamic viewpoint with modern medical research.
6. To highlight the significance of aḥādīth by this research by proving that the instructions of the Prophet in this regard are still effective.

Literature Review:

The sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the medicine are not hidden from the scholars of aḥādīth and their commentators. Most of the books of aḥādīth include '*Kitāb al-Ṭibb*' (Book of Medicine) and the scholars have been producing the sayings of different physicians of their age. Later, the scholars have also written separate books on the aḥādīth about medicine. Abū Ja'far Mustaghfarī, Ḍiyā' al-din Muqadasī, Dhahbī, Ibn Qayyim must be mentioned here. Among the later scholars Dr. Shahid Ather's "Islamic Medicine" and Dr. Khālid

Ghaznawī's "*Tibb-e-Nabawī Aur Jadid Science*" can also be mentioned. In 2004, Zafar Ali was awarded M.Phil degree by University of the Punjab on his thesis entitled "*Tibb-e-Nabawī Par Pākistān mein Taṣnīfī Kām Kā Taḥqīqī Wa Tajziyātī Muṭāli'ah*) under the supervision of Dr. Ghulam Ali Khan. However, the work that has been done so far merely consists of a collection of aḥādīth about medicine. No one has ever piled up the traditions pertaining to contagious disease and epidemic separately and such traditions have never been analyzed in view of modern medical research. Therefore, there was a need to work in this direction. This is going to be a useful addition in the scholarly circles which will be very significant. By giving a cursory view on the ḥādīth literature, it becomes clear that there are two kinds of aḥādīth in this regard: one that negate the concept of contagious disease as the Prophet said in a tradition of Sahih Bukhari, "There is no contagious disease", and the other that support the concept as the Prophet said, "the (cattle) suffering from a disease should not be mixed up with healthy (cattle)." For the purpose of research following steps have been taken.

1. All those aḥādīth have been collected that support the concept of contagious disease and epidemic, either explicitly or implicitly.
2. All those aḥādīth have also been collected that negate this concept.
3. The chain of narrators of both kinds of aḥādīth has been assessed for their authenticity.
4. The authentic aḥādīth have been compared and one kind of aḥādīth has been given preference over to the other.
5. The concept of contagious diseases and epidemics among the scholars of aḥādīth has been compared with the modern medical concept.
6. This has also been seen that such concept was present among the Muslim physicians or not? What were their contributions in this regard?