

PURIFICATION of the HEART



Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.....

Matthew 5:8

There is an organ in the human being; if it becomes pure, the whole body becomes pure. If it becomes evil, the whole body becomes evil. This organ is the heart.

From a Hadith

There are two types of diseases of the heart:

1. Shubuhát- This type refers to subtleties and skepticism, fear, suspicion and anxiety.
2. Shahawát- This type refers to the carnal desires, the base desires of the self.

There is a way or method to overcome these diseases and that being the refinement of your nature, or the cultivation of morals, courtesy, and culture. The beginning of which is shame and bashfulness. That is an outward mechanism, the inward mechanism is called guilt. If you think yourself to be hidden, know that God and the unseen world are aware of you and what you do. To establish this first step you must be vigilant and always aware that your conscience is recording all that you do and time will remind you of your deeds. The rewards of shame and guilt are forgiveness and self-respect!

The second step is humility. Humility is the act of purposefully lowering oneself before others. This allows you to be the observer of situations and the learner of actions. Know that the heart dwells under the tongue, and the tongue is the interpreter of the heart. The tongue is also the first to depart from humility. Incorporating humility will allow you to gain the respect of others around you, for its reward is strength and honor!

The third step which must be taken before the heart can begin to be cleansed of any of its diseases is poverty. Poverty is the act of emptying oneself of a negativity so that you may gain its opposite. If you seek knowledge, you must first admit ignorance so that knowledge may be gained; if you seek power, you must first admit weakness. So forth and so forth, such is the way of poverty. The reward of poverty is wealth!

Once you acquire these three attributes you may commence the purification of the heart process. Should you fail in acquiring these attributes, the process of purification will not commence and return itself to its former state; and there is no salvation like the hearts salvation. The goal of this process is freedom, freedom from being controlled by things which exist outside the self. This is true freedom, a freedom which cannot be taken away.

You have been created in this body to have a relationship with the Universe. This body must be controlled, either by you or by others. True freedom lies in you being the controller and not the others. However, if you cannot control yourself, others will control you, even to the point of locking you in a cage. It is incumbent upon every soul to understand the diseases of the heart and how to cure them. The refinement of behavior and character is the key to unlocking the door to this freedom.

Behavior and character come from three sources: nature, custom, and law. Nature is the outcome of thoughts and experiences; customs are passed down through family and tradition which are shared through a community or a nation; and the law issues forth from scholars, authorities, and Prophets. Some of our natural character is acquired at birth and never changes, and some are derived through our habits which are alterable depending upon our inner and external circumstance. Balancing these habits grants us the strength to overcome all difficulties.

The human being has been created with a very delicate nature. All things we require for existence such as nourishment, clothing, and shelter must be processed. This is a hint at our divine nature and a sign of our distinction from all other creatures on the earth.

It is the higher dimension in which we subsist. It is for this reason that we must strive to attain a station of purity and refinement, otherwise we are no better than the wildest brutes. Balance is essential to achieve this station. Balance in appetite, appearance, and protection. Every habit which is either in excess or is deficient becomes a vice. Our very survival requires thought, research, and experimentation. This is the Work or Labor we have been purposed with from our Creator. Therefore, balance or Justice, is the condition we must seek for ourselves and others we care for in order to achieve success.

Seek ye the Middle Way in all things.

DISEASES OF THE HEART

1. MISERLINESS- Refusal to give what is owed according to sacred law or virtuous merit. This refers to the withholding of something that is owed to someone. Could be something as complex as a debt or something as simple as returning a smile. The sacred law covers many things, from prayer, charity, fasting and so forth. This also covers the divine rights

due to other human beings such as respect, honesty, compassion and so forth. Virtuous merit refers to those things which are due to someone based on common sense. This is the lesser of the two and equates to nitpicking over trivialities. Return good for good, and good for evil. Deal justly with all, for it could be that the evil done to you was for the good, and if you return that evil with evil you may in essence be returning evil on the good and losing the opportunity to benefit therefrom. Miserliness arises because of the love of the world. It can be overcome by viewing the world as feces. Beware, beware, that you do not act the miser for the benefit of this world, for it is a fleeing shadow that will one day leave you without protection. There is no lasting benefit in this world, and in the Hereafter only loss for the miser.

CURE: To realize the way of the miser is misery! Exhausting yourself to accumulate wealth over a lifetime is a miserable existence, for one day death will grasp you and others will consume your wealth. Both the rich and poor are met with the same end, so build your wealth to sustain yourself and family and do not desire that which is beyond your needs.

2. RECKLESSNESS- To be wild and careless, prideful and arrogant. This has often times been mistaken for freedom, the unhinged and unplugged chaos of carelessness. Be wary of extravagant living and living beyond your means. Living without a care in the world will get you trapped faster than you can speed away from it. This disease also refers to the unbridled desire to need and want more. If you find yourself discontent with what you have, gaining more will not bring peace to your life. Ascertain your needs while in the time of contentment, and not in times of agitation.

CURE: Treat with hunger and remembrance of the life to come.

3. HATRED- This disease needs no definition. Hatred has no place in the social structure of human beings. Hatred rises from prejudice; prejudices of race, culture, nationality, religion, and class are said to be the root of all evil in our age. Avoid hate and those who participate in it at all costs.
CURE: Pray and show goodwill to those you don't like. If others don't like you, simply avoid them. It is fruitless to try to change one's opinion about you through words. It may be that one day their hatred will return upon themselves and they will find themselves alone with none to help them. At such a time will they be willing to forgo their hatred. Treat hatred with a stronger feeling of love.
4. OPPRESSION- Also known as injustice, this disease arises from the desire to have power and authority over others. Be unjust to no soul, and remember from what despicable state we all came from. There is no oppression that is not met with hatred, nor is there an oppression that doesn't begin with pride.
CURE: To bring death to remembrance often. Death is the great equalizer, both for the just and the unjust.
5. LOVE OF THE WORLD- This world is a bridge to the next, pass over it but do not build upon it obstructing the path of those who are to follow after you. The world has been likened to the womb of a mother, its existence is solely for the purpose of developing virtuous faculties which will be useful in the world to come. Vast are its resources, and vast are its allurements. But true wealth is that which you inherently possess, not outwardly. Concern yourselves with that wealth which you possess, and not with that which can be taken away. However, do not condemn the world, for it is the very machine that leads us to the next. Have respect and reverence for the world, and treat it as though you would treat a sick child.

CURE: Realize the benefits of the world and utilize them for the betterment of your inner equilibrium. The outside world is ephemeral and attachment to it is futile. Bring to remembrance the passing seasons and you will realize the impermanent state of the world.

6. ENVY- This arises from resentment, and some say this is the root disease. Envy is to look with evil (the evil-eye). Envy is not beneficial for anyone, and it is the first wrong committed in the world of being. To manifest envy is to manifest the attributes of the most wretched creature.

Nothing kept the devil from being subdued by Adam except envy. Envy harms the envier before the object of envy. It is the end of softness and the beginning of harshness. If you desire someone to lose a blessing, you have envy! Envy consumes good deeds like fire consumes dry wood.

CURE: First understand that everyone who possesses a blessing is envied. God is the bestower of blessings. Don't harm or oppress anyone, fear God and hate the experience of envy. Do good to the envious when evil would seem like a good thing to do, and praise others when it would seem better to say something negative. It has been said, "the envious cannot enter into leadership." Realize no one wants to follow someone who craves after what others possess.

7. BEING OVERLY MODEST- This refers to over stepping the bounds of modesty. Modesty is a virtuous thing and if modesty were to be given life it would be a righteous man. But there must be a balance of all things, especially in being modest. Being overly modest is the gateway to arrogance, and steps should be taken to limit modesty. Modesty is blameworthy when it prevents you from speaking out against a matter that is inappropriate in terms of oppression. The greatest struggle is speaking the truth to a tyrant. Thus meekness at a time when courage is required results in loss and oppression.

CURE- To realize modesty is acceptable when rooted in kindness and generosity. Overstepping the bounds of propriety in modesty leads to a state of being overly self-righteous.

8. VAIN IMAGINATIONS- This refers to entertaining thoughts about matters which do not pertain to yourself. Fantasizing about things which are forbidden or naturally repugnant, weaknesses and faults of others, and occupying oneself in the sciences the end result of which is only words. Do not include such things that are entertaining to yourself, something that is necessary for a healthy mind, but do not overindulge in those things.
CURE: Occupy your mind with matters that will lead to action in the world. This will prevent your mind from wondering off into areas not beneficial for yourself and others. All thoughts find their expression in the world of being, and therefore should lead to deeds which are Praiseworthy. Should you find yourself wondering about things that will lead to destruction or imprisonment, abandon them and reposition your thoughts on that which will bring peace and freedom.
9. FEAR OF POVERTY- This world is the paradise of the unfaithful and the hellfire of the faithful. If you have reverence for God know that He will provide for you, there is no need to have anxiety about the necessities of life. Poverty is a relative state, only comparable to those who possess wealth. Mark Twain once said, "Most of my problems I never encountered!" In the acquisition of wealth, doubt and fear of losing one's possessions blossoms. This is the trick of the devil, who threatens you with poverty and commands you to immorality. Whereas God is Most-Forgiving and full of bounty. There was a time when your possessions belonged to another, and there will be a time when your possessions will once again belong to another.

CURE: Know first that all things exist to be used and made useful. The lack of possessing something now does not presuppose the lack of something when needed. The process for obtaining something by necessity is mindfulness. The will power of the human being is strong, that which is willed is that which is manifested, and contentment is a treasure which is never exhausted!

10. SHOW OFF- Eye-service, hypocrisy, dissimulation, flattery, deceit, trickery. This disease refers to actions taken for the sake of being seen without any real interest in what is being accomplished. Performing good deeds solely for the purpose of others seeing them or hearing about them. This opens the door for lies, calumny, backbiting, and slander to enter the world. This door is covetousness, the desire to harm others secretly for the benefit of one's reputation and worldly benefits. There are three signs of this: 1. Laziness when alone but enthusiastic in the presence of others; 2. Increasing one's action when praised; and 3. Decreasing one's action when not praised. Seeking prestige and promotion from those in authority through this method will result in failure. For if you are incapable of performing a task but make it appear as if you can, the end result will be humiliation. And there is nothing worse than a religious charlatan.

CURE: Desire all things from God and not from the creation. In one word the cure is Sincerity. Remove from the heart four things: 1. Love of praise; 2. Fear of blame; 3. Desire for worldly gain from people; and 4. Fear of harm from others. In the Most Holy Book it states, "What manner of man art thou, O vain and heedless one, who wouldst appear other than thou art?"

11. UNCERTAINTY- This refers to a lack of faith, not only in God, but in oneself. Many of the diseases of the heart originate from a lack of certainty and an impaired sense of

faith and trust in God. Doubt, fear, and suspicion all find their origin in weak foundations. Build your life upon the foundations of truth, faith, and submission to the will of the universe. This will provide a firm ground to stand upon and a soft cushion to land upon when you fall.

CURE: Realize that true success is dependent upon being able to approach all situations from a balanced, conscious state of mind, and not in the accumulation of material possessions. In a word this cure is Objectivity. And know that successes and failures revolve around your approach to the problem at hand, and not what can be gained temporarily. All failures are steps towards success. In this sense failure is just an illusion. So there is certainly nothing to be uncertain of!

12. DISPLEASURE WITH THE DIVINE DECREE- This occurs when one resists the decree of God, or is unsatisfied with what we could term as destiny. The feeling of “I don’t deserve this” and so forth. The world is the place of purification, the very reason we exist is to purify our souls and draw nearer to God, and to carry forth an ever-advancing civilization. There are four possible states of the human being: 1. Blessed; 2. Distressed; 3. Obedient; or 4. Disobedient. From these there are four positive responses: 1. Thankfulness; 2. Patience; 3. Humbleness; and 4. Repentance. This world is the realm of tests, and though we have all been given the faculties to succeed, many fall short in the actual examination.

CURE: Be thankful in your time of blessing, patient in your time of distress, humble in your obedience, and repentant in your disobedience. Do not be displeased with God or His creation, rather be displeased with evil and seek good.

Complain about difficulties or situations, but do not complain about people or situations beyond your immediate control. It is often that the weak are made strong, and the strong made weak, even in the blink of an eye.

13. GREED- This is covetousness and desire which is caused by heedlessness. If you ask Greed about his trade he will say, "earning humiliation," if you ask about his father, he will answer, "doubt about the divine decree," and if you ask of his goal, he will fret, "deprivation of the very thing that is good for me." CURE: There are a few things at play here, the first is sustenance. There are two types of sustenance: one is outward (food, shelter, clothing) and one is inward (knowledge, character, well-being). Sustenance is that which you benefit from or that which you possess already. Have you noticed that the same type of people keep coming into your life? This is because your company is equal to your sustenance. Also, the guest comes with his own provisions. Therefore, don't get angry when you don't get what you want, the sustenance was ordained already. For no soul will perish til it's ordained sustenance is completed for it. So fear God and use your sustenance accordingly and timely. Don't hoard it, and don't waste it. And don't let the delay of your sustenance be the cause of your disobedience. The great poison is in thinking that death is a far off event, perchance it is nigh? So don't be heedless of it. There are two types of people in the world: 1. Felicitous, and 2. Miserable. The miserable one can be recognized through five attributes: 1. Hard of heart, meaning no mercy in the heart; 2. Eyes that don't weep, meaning they are cold-hearted; 3. Lack of shame/modesty, meaning they have no thought about how others view them, but keep in mind outward appearances can be deceiving; 4. Has an appetite for worldly things; and 5. Overly fearful of death.

14. FALSE HOPE- False hope is a quick acting poison that produces worldly attachment. False hope in things such as security, wealth, and success leads people to think that a long life is guaranteed. Having a strong sense of hope is a very good thing, but true hope is for the generations to come. If hope never existed, no one would have bothered to plant the

first tree. So the false sense of hope is in placing hope in things that are ephemeral. There is another sense of false hope, and that is having hope in something but neglecting the means to achieve what one hopes for.

CURE: Fear, a balanced sense of fear. Fear rooted in the hereafter. Having a balanced sense of fear prevents moral complacency and self-righteousness.

15. NEGATIVE THOUGHTS- Having a bad opinion, suspicion, and baseless assumptions; it can also refer to a superstition. You should always have a good opinion about God, yourself, and others. No one has ever been harmed by a good opinion. Be especially aware of the bad opinion of others which is unmerited. However, never trust anyone with your obligations, family, or wealth until you've tried them one million times. The worst possible thing you could do is mention the former evil actions of another.

CURE: Know that you will never be free from having bad opinions, but the cure is in recognition and denial of its fruition in the world. If you feel it, just keep going like it wasn't there. Voicing bad opinions is the worst of speech.

16. SELF CONCEIT- This is vanity and marveling at one's self for its accomplishments. This is the act of self-exaltation, heedless of the root or cause of success. This is distinct from pride in that pride requires at least two people.

CURE: God is the Source of every creator and his creation. If you think you are possessed of a certain quality or have achieved mastery of a particular subject, know that there is always someone better and more refined.

17. FRAUD- This is deception, deceit, and subterfuge. This is the act of intentionally concealing a known quality or aspect from someone or a group of people for gain. It is the adornment of something that lacks benefit by making the evil

to appear good. It is the art of persuasion and the embellishment of the truth in any way, shape, or form.

CURE: Honor the truth no matter the consequences. There is no greater consequence than sacrificing the truth. You must understand that lies create false realities, and false realities crumble under the weight of time.

18. ANGER- This can also be referred to as rage. The ocean of all diseases of the heart is anger. If you come to its shore, you will see its waves overflowing, and many will drown in it. So say what you will about it without constraint. The best way to draw near to a good character is to not get angry, and the best way to avoid wrath, is to not get angry. Anger must be transformed into something useful. This is a very complex disease and it takes great effort to overcome it. In order to understand it we must first realize that some form of anger, or a certain amount of anger, is essential to human existence and a part of our fundamental nature that cannot be altered. Essentially our brains have three parts: 1. R brain(reptilian); 2. Mid-brain; and 3. New brain. The R brain controls our lower functions and takes over in times of stress. The mid-brain is the seat of emotions, and the new brain is the seat of the intellect. This is a rather crude description but serves to illustrate how anger is deeply imbedded within our nature. Anger in this sense is a survival mechanism and we must learn to recognize it and direct it properly so that it becomes beneficial to us rather than detrimental. When the three parts of the brain are in balance, it is called Just. However, anger is one of the excesses of the human condition, and when it's out of balance, it's just plain ugly. There are four primary reasons for anger: 1. Primal needs-food, shelter, and protection or survival; 2. Position-this refers to things which relate to self-dignity and self-worth; 3. Field specifics-This refers to things that relate to a particular interest within the individual. For instance, a librarian sees a book being destroyed, they get angry whereas a farmer would

not of necessity get angry; 4. Sense of honor-this refers to family, religion, culture, race, nation, etc. Number four is of interest, because it is where prejudice comes from. So the root of prejudice is in anger, and that is why it is such a difficult concept to overcome. So we say that anger is an excess of the human condition, meaning it is an imbalance. To illustrate we have made this chart:

<u>Balance</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Excess</u>	<u>Deficiency</u>
Wisdom	Rational (New Brain)	Fraud	Ignorance
Courage	Irascible (Mid Brain)	Hastiness	Cowardice
Temperance	Concupiscent (R Brain)	Debauchery	Indifference
Justice	All 3 Balanced.	-	Oppression

CURE: There are two cures for anger. The first one is to remember the praise of God and make repentance. This has purposed to provide us with humility and forbearance. The only reason why we get angry is because we see ourselves. So forgo yourself and let go. The second cure is to recognize that no action comes except from God. In this case, all anger is directed towards God. So if you have reverence for God, remember the One with Whom you are angry with in reality and direct it accordingly. There are a few exercises that can be done in order to bring your anger under control, and remember: the strong one is not the one that can overcome another with brute force, but the strong one is the one who control themselves when they are angry! So when you find yourself in anger: 1. If you are standing, sit; if you are sitting, lie down; if that doesn't work, take a shower or rinse your face with cold water; 2. Leave and let the anger subside, recognize the no-win situation and leave-off. I tell you this now so you know, the only win-win situation where you let

anger loose is when you are fighting for your life, otherwise, just leave.

Now if you are raising children, the first five years relates to the concupiscent, so play with them. Let them discover the world and develop. The second five years relates to the irascible, so discipline them, but do not let them get angry. Teach them control. The third five years relates to the rational, befriend them and lend guidance and support. At fifteen they should be a fully devolved human being, let them go. Learn the difference between good character and bad character, and spend your time with those who show forth good character and yearn for it.

19. HEEDLESSNESS- This is another root disease, and refers to inattentiveness, carelessness, and foolishness. It is likened to being caught off-guard and it is a type of forgetfulness. People are heedless of their condition and direction. It has been said, "People are asleep; when they die, they wake up!" Heedlessness is actually a punishment, though we all move in and out of this state. When you turn away from God(reality), He increases your heedlessness. There are degrees of heedlessness, and the disease is when total remembrance is lost. The more mindfulness of God(reality), the less heedlessness exists.

CURE: See truth as truth and bend your will towards it; see falsehood as falsehood, and avoid it. Another way to cure it is to spend time with good people who will inform you of your heedlessness. There are four ways you can remain vigilant against heedlessness: 1. Seek forgiveness from God; 2. Visit righteous people and their graves; 3. Daily prayer in a structured manner; and 4. Study Sacred Texts.

20. RANCOR- This refers holding on to spite, hate, and malice towards someone or a group of people. In essence it is having anger in the heart and wanting to hurt someone. This is a sure way to kill the heart.

CURE: Do good to someone when you are inclined to do harm to them. The heart is naturally inclined to do good to others, let this outweigh the evil you intend to do. If you are good to a noble person, you will own them; if you do good to a wicked person, you will increase their rancor and it will turn on themselves.

21. PRIDE AND ARROGANCE- This is especially problematic when you boast about something you have not earned. It can be something as simple as declaring yourself the winner at something you cheated at, or as complex as boasting about familial achievements you had absolutely nothing to do with. For instance, if you boast about your parents' great position but have not earned a place in the family hierarchy, then they left behind bad children. Children boast about their parents because they see in them something great, something they can strive to achieve. But it is childish and should be outgrown. The mountain of this disease is pride. This refers to haughtiness and arrogance, but pride is arrogance without reality to back it up. All of us have some degree of pride, but there are ways to treat this disease and its effects on the heart. First realize your true state: human beings were created the weakest of all creatures, but through the gifts of intellect and free will we are made the mightiest of creatures. This is due to the nature with which we were created, and not through any means which we have acquired ourselves. Pride is of three kinds: 1. against God; 2. against the Prophets; and 3. against fellow men and women. It is natural to want to succeed and to be the best at something, deep down all we care about is winning, but that doesn't mean that we should be prideful about it. The devil entered into the East through the names of greatness; in the West by mispronouncing those names. God spoke, "Omnipotence is My cloak; whoever rivals Me in this, I will break his back!" There are eight qualities of pride, two are spiritual and six are worldly: 1. Thinking oneself to be better or more capable than

others; 2. Looking down upon others by performing good deeds; 3. Through lineage: "I am better than everyone else because of where I'm from!" Nay, we were all created from a despicable fluid! If your deeds hold you back, your lineage won't help you; 4. Through beauty: beauty is an illusion; it is not earned, it is a gift from God; also, beauty is a mix of average, proportionate things. There is nothing unique about it. Those things which are unique or disproportionate we usually term ugly; 5. From possessions, ie. business, wealth, and perspective...more illusions; 6. Through the abundance of family, friends, or students/employees; 7. Through strength; there has never been anything raised up in creation that has not been brought down; and 8. through knowledge; let the human being reflect where they came from: you were once not even thought of, and soon you will not be thought about; and if you live long enough, you will end up where you started.

CURE: Know your Lord and know yourself; realize your limitations, ie. you are a slave to the physical world! Pride negates thankfulness, and the nature of humility is gratitude. Hear the truth and follow it, making repentance and serving reality breaks the seal of the heart. Knowing your end is like your beginning, and that if you raise yourself up, God will bring you down.

22. DISPLEASURE OF BLAME- This is a common disease, and people just don't like to take the blame for something. This involves being overly concerned with other people's opinions and experiencing discomfort with criticism. It is completely natural to retain a sense of pride and when someone is accused of something their first thoughts are at attempts to shift the blame from themselves. This is an unfortunate reaction and if you fall victim to the false accusations of others due to their inability to accept responsibility the first response should be "Investigation" and not fear, anger, or wrath. This may also include, on a more personal level, taking

actions in life in deference to praise from others or in an attempt to avoid their warranted blame or disapproval. If you are worried about how others will receive you, in a sense you are creating a false reality. The measure of which depends upon your amount of fear or apprehension.

CURE: The cure is to have a sense of certainty in oneself that your inner and outer lives are in accordance with reality. If you stand for the truth and your position is grounded in reality, then there is no fear to grasp that warrants displeasure of blame. When being falsely accused or blamed for something patience is the key to overcoming. Beware that you do not over react to being falsely accused of something. Poor decisions in this case may lead to blameworthy action which could be avoided if patience were applied.

23. AVERSION TO DEATH- Death is an inevitability! If you flee from it, it is a deep chasm of heedlessness; if you run towards it, it is a mountain of arrogance and ignorance. However, it is still a disease if you hear about it and it bothers you. Whoever remembers death is ennobled by four things: 1. Contentment, because you have achieved divine acceptance; 2. Energy, because you are propelled towards action; 3. Repentance, because you are reminded of your deeds; and 4. Thankfulness, because it is a way out!

CURE: Realize your distaste for death doesn't change anything. For the faithful death is a celebration, for the unfaithful, it is the end. We are all on death row, we're just waiting for the executioner. There are three executioners: 1. Ourselves; 2. Others; 3. Time. The first two can be avoided or controlled in a sense, the third is inevitable.

24. OBLIVIOUSNESS TO BLESSINGS- Blessings are gifts from God. There are two types of blessings: 1. Root of blessings which include life, health, and basic necessities; and 2. Branch of blessings which include embellishments. God is the Source of all blessings because He has created us in this

body and given to us the faculties to subsist in the world which He also created. He is also the Source of the second type of blessings because all things that we embellish in our lives are derived from the faculties of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. Even the gifts that we receive from one another are due to the inherent relationships we have developed through the power of our intellect and our social nature. There are no blessings that cannot be tied to the Source of our creation. The highest blessing is life itself. We often times don't realize or are heedless of what a great blessing it is to have been created a human being, the most noblest of creatures. Two-hundred thousand years of existence and we have yet to discover or even imagine a creature that is more blessed than the human being. Blessings can be short term or long term. There are blessings that are beneficial in the short term and harmful in the long term, or harmful in the short term and beneficial in the long term. The completion or perfection of blessings is Paradise, whatever and whenever that may be, whether now or in the hereafter. So Paradise isn't a far off distant place, it is the realization and utilization of our blessings.

CURE: We cannot count our blessings, for they are innumerable, yet we are charged with being grateful for them. The cure to being oblivious to them then is gratitude, whether the blessing is known or unknown. It has been said that God never removes a blessing from a soul until it has changed something within itself. The true measure of a human is the reaction to the gain or loss of blessings. The righteous are always grateful and mindful of their blessings and their character and faith are not altered by the reception or loss of blessings. The wretched are ungrateful towards others and their temperament changes according to their blessings.

25. DERISION- This covers mockery, ridicule, etc. This stems from ignorance and a lack of compassion. It has been perfected in our times as an art form and has become

acceptable as such. For purely entertainment purposes it may be acceptable, however care should be taken not to exceed propriety. Hurting the feelings of others is one of the highest blameworthy sins committed. Never belittle anyone, for they may be a guardian or angel of God.

CURE: The source of derision is pride, likewise its cure is similar to pride. However, the consequence of derision is humiliation. Comedy ceases to be funny when humiliation arises from it. We have all experienced humiliation at some point, and it's important to remember how this feeling persists in order to avoid causing it and bringing it into existence in others. The cure is not in avoiding comedy and allying against it. The cure is recognizing the point at which comedy ends and humiliation begins.

The root of all the diseases of the heart is seeking to be self-satisfied. The human being will never be able to acquire any benefit if it remains satisfied with itself. The origin of goodness and beneficial attributes is in the understanding that the self cannot be completely satisfied. This leads the self or soul to change and evolve. Those who are self-satisfied deem the wrong to be right, and the right to be wrong. The path we take to satisfy ourselves determines our equilibrium. This path is controlled by our desires. If you wish to view and understand the position of yourself, determine what desires you possess. Understanding is the vessel of knowledge upon the sea of experience. Action is the commander of this blessed and righteous vessel, and desire is its rudder!

Peace be upon those who follow the right path!