Spiritual Guidance and Religious Support for Patients, in the Sunnah of the Prophet

“An Analytical study of the Book of Patients in Al- Jami As Sahih By Imam Al Bukhari”

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Abstract

This study deals with the issue of religious support for the sick, and spiritual guidance. This can be defined as: providing help, care and service to the sick. It is an essential part of Religion, and contributes to the process of treatment and the relief of pain. The study is also an observation of the Sunnah of the Prophet, through an analysis of “The Book of Patients”, part of the Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith series. Between the existing foundations of faith in Allah the Almighty, and patience in the struggle to seek the reward of Allah. This includes the anticipation to cleanse the sins of disease, the acceptance of the decree of Allah, and reward given by Allah.

Religious support means to take time with the patient and observation in clinics, to pray for him and provide support. Furthermore, providing Fatwa for the patient, and encouragement to follow the example of the Prophet’s own patience.

This study tackles the communication skills that need to be spiritual guidance practice during treatment of the patient and shows the most important qualities of spiritual guidance, such as knowledge, patience, compassion and non-discrimination.

The researcher recommend the expansion of the study of Prophetic applications in the field of religious support for patients.

Key Words: Spiritual Guidance, Religious Support, Sunnah, Book of Patience by Sahih Al Bukhari
Introduction:

All praise is due to Allah, the Most High, He who is in the Holy Qur’an, and “He who grants cure to those who become ill” – Suah Ash Shu’ara – V:80.

And may Peace be upon the Holy Prophet, the One who observed pain of illness with patience. Spiritual guidance for patience have a very important effect in curing illness. Therefore, Western society pay great attention to this. It has become a module of study in Universities, and a special department has been dedicated to the this in hospitals.

In the Muslim world, we are still taking a few steps towards this, although the Qur’an and the Hadith contains much of the fundamental knowledge of this topic.

One of the Muslim scholars who have paid attention to this topic is Imam Ibnal Qayyim, who has commented on the influence of believing in Allah and consequently Allah’s power to cure.

( Believing in Allah SWT, love for Allah, enjoyment of the Remembrance of Allah and trusting in Allah will hasten the cure and ease pain )

It is this part of the study which depicts the Prophet (May Peace and Blessings be Upon Him) and his practices. From this we gain an understanding and an analysis of Spiritual Guidance and Religious Support.

Questions of this study:
1) What is the meaning of Religious Support?
2) Is there any evidence of this knowledge in the Sunnah?
3) What basic principles can be followed in the practice of this knowledge?
4) Which skills of communication in the Sunnah can be followed when dealing with Patients?

Limitations of this study:

The researcher chose the “Book of Patients” from the Sahih of Imam Al-Bukhari because Imam Al Bukhari has separated the book of Patients from the book of Medicine, unlike other Scholars who have combined the two.

The Book of Patients show how the Prophet dealt with patients, whilst the book of Medicine describes with how to treat patients.

Methods of the study:
1) Analytical method.
2) Extracting method – after analysing the Hadith, the researchers have attempted to extract how the Prophet handled giving religious support and spiritual guidance.

Previous studies:

This subject is relatively new for researches and this particular topic. However, one previous study found is:-

Prophetic Guidance in the care of Terminally ill patients – By Professor Mohammed Eesa As-Sharifain.

This article was presented for a conference entitled “Social Security from and Islamic Perspective.” This was held in Jordan, Al Al-Bayt University, 3rd July 2012. Dr Sahiffain’s article tackled the
concept of the care of terminally ill patients, how to deal with relatives, friends and neighbours and how to pass on sad news.

Both articles agree that some issues relate to patients but differ on the concept of religious support.

Plan of study:

Section 1 – The concept of Religious Support and it’s importance.
1:1 The concept of Religious Support.
   1:1:1 A linguistic definition.
   1:1:2 Terminology.
1:2 The importance of Religious Support for Patients.

Section 2 - The basis of Religious Support for Patients.
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2:2 Believing that illness is a Divine Will and the Decree of Allah.
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2:4 Patience is reason for gaining reward and entering Paradise.
2:5 Hope and belief in Allah.
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Section 3 – Methods of Spiritual Guidance in the Sunnah.
3:1 Visiting Patients.
3:2 Praying for Patients.
3:3 Placing a hand on the head of a Patient to calm him/her.
3:4 Modelling the style of how Prophets would observe their own pain.
3:5 Observing the situation of Patients.
3:6 Sympathy with Patients.
3:7 Answering questions of Patients.

Section 4 – Communication skills with the Patient and personal qualities of those giving Spiritual Guidance.
4:1 Skills of communication with Patients.
   First: Positive dialogue with Patients.
   Second: Listening to the complaints of a patient.
   Third: Fulfilling a Patient or family request if they ask to see someone.
   Fourth: Respecting a Patient’s request if they ask someone to leave.
   Fifth: Avoiding argument with the Patient.
4:2 The qualities of those giving Religious Support to Patients.
   First: Knowledge of a Spiritual Supporter.
   Second: Patience with a sick person.
   Third: Initiative when giving Religious Support.
   Fourth: Giving support to anyone who is in need without discrimination.
   Fifth: Utilising guidance as means of Da’wah.
   Sixth: Being kind with the Patient.

Conclusion.

Recommendations.
Section 1 – The concept of Religious Support and its importance:

1:1 The concept of Religious Support:

1:1:1 A linguistic definition:

Ibn Al Faris said “aldaalwaleaynwalmim” means to support something (3).

According Ibn Manthur, “Da’a Ma” means to support something that is leaning and make it straight (4).

In “AlmaejamAlwasit”, the author said “Da’a Ma” means preventing something from failing and strengthening it (5).

From the above, we can clearly see that “Da’wah,” from a linguistic point of view can be defined as giving help and support to the ones who are sick or ill, as they will gain strength from this support.

Dean, “Da Ya Noon,” means surrendering or obeying (6). And “Dean Al Islami” means peace and submission to Allah (7).

1:1:2 Terminology:

The concept of Religious Support for Patients is a contemporary one (8).

This type of knowledge has recently become a focus in Arab countries, and its equivalent in Western countries is Spiritual guidance and support. Priests are often named Spiritual Fathers offering Spiritual Treatment (9).

The concept of Religiousness is wider than Spiritual concepts. It contains beliefs, worship, ethics and spiritual values.

Imam Ibn Al Qayim used the phrase “spiritual and cardiovascular drugs” (10) before Western Scholars in defining the influence of belief in Allah and its contribution to cure, as well as prescribed medicine.

To conclude, religious support for patients refers to the provision of aid, care and service to the patient depending on religion to contribute to the process of treatment and ease of pain. This includes supporting the ill person medically and spiritually, as well as moral support in guiding the soul.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a group of medical efforts provided by a multi-disciplinary team of patients facing chronic diseases, with the aim of improving the quality of life and suffering of them and their families, whilst taking into account the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs (11).

A Human being is not just a flesh, but also a thinking, feeling and soulful creature containing secrets given by Allah (12).

As for the role of religious therapy in mental illness, the treatment must be an integrated treatment of the pain, discussing and the modifying thinking and behaviour. It must also address the body that has broken its functions with medicine, which emphasizes the importance of combining drug therapy with drugs, psychological and religious therapy in a comprehensive integrative treatment (13).

Taking a personal experience, I received an urgent call from Liverpool Royal Hospital when a Muslim patient refused to take medication and asked for Spiritual treatment only. I explained to the patient that it is necessary in Islam to combine both medical and spiritual treatment as advised by the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). The patient accepted this and agreed to take medication. The staff at the hospital were very happy and amazed when I explained that in Islam we seek both forms of treatment.
1:2 The importance of Religious Support for Patients:

Muslim Scholars spoke about the effects of religious medication in curing the patient. Imam Ibn Al Qayim said: “Some medication cures many illnesses, and this includes both physical and spiritual treatment, such as Trust in Allah, prayer, repentance, supplication, charity, being kind and helping those in need. This type of medication has been practices by many nations and from different faiths, and it was found that this medication has a great effect in curing the patient”\(^{(14)}\).

Many studies have been carried out on how the effects of spiritual treatments after undergoing surgery, showing positive and important results. Cancer patients show more calmness and acceptance, and reduction of pain. This is especially true when he/she feels it agrees with the beliefs and teachings of Religion\(^{(15)}\).

Many medical researches realise the importance of spiritual treatment and taking into consideration religious beliefs and how this contributes to cure.

Nowadays, in the USA, more than 60 faculties of medicine contain modules on spiritual medication\(^{(16)}\).

The World Health Organization also recommends discussing spiritual needs in relation to the health of the patient\(^{(17)}\).

Dr. Bushnaaq said: “The right practice Doctors should be aware of are the values and principles of patients, as these have become the core of his life and existence”\(^{(18)}\).

In a famous study, J. Lannert emphasized that a large percentage of doctors and psychiatrists do not receive enough training or knowledge about faith and its effects on the mental health of patients. This is why the American Society for Psychiatrics appointed a group of researches to study religious and spiritual needs and how they can affect a patient. The results of such findings have been collated in an index of Psychiatric diseases\(^{(19)}\).

Glacer, the leader of the Psychotherapy school feels that mental health is linked to ethics and values and concepts adopted by the individual\(^{(20)}\).

Also, Western scholars found out that when we give spiritual support to patients, which lifts up the self defence system, and improves the will to be cured. This is especially true in more complicated illnesses\(^{(21)}\).

Section 2 - The basis of Religious Support for Patients:

2:1 Believing in Allah:

The basis of religious support is the Oneness of Allah. There are also many sub-issues as derived from the applied Sunnah.

Imam Ibn Al Qayim said: “When the heart is connected with his Lord, the Creator of Illness and Cure, he has firm believe in Allah as the Master of the Universe and there is complete trust in Him. This will contribute to cure”\(^{(22)}\).

Allah says in the Qur’an: “He who grants cure to those who become ill” – Suah Ash Shu’ara – V:80.

Therefore, cure is in the hands of Allah, and there is no cure without His Will.

This has become the core of many Hadith. As Imam Al Bukhari reported the Book of Patients: “Whenever Allah’s Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) paid a visit to a patient, or a patient was brought to him, he used to invoke Allah, saying, "Take away the disease, O the Lord of the people!"
Cure him as You are the One Who cures. There is no cure but Yours, a cure that leaves no disease.”

When Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) limited called out to “Lord of the People”, he limited the power of cure the hands of Allah. Furthermore, mentioning “You are the One Who Cures,” signifies that there is no cure in the medicine unless Allah has created a cure within the medicine.

To ask for a cure, a believer must supplicate to Allah:

“Ibn `Abbas said to me, "Shall I show you a woman of the people of Paradise?" I said, "Yes." He said, ‘This black lady came to the Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) and said, ‘I get attacks of epilepsy and my body becomes uncovered; please invoke Allah for me.’ The Prophet PBUH said (to her), 'If you wish, be patient and you will have (enter) Paradise; and if you wish, I will invoke Allah to cure you.' She said, 'I will remain patient,' and added, 'but I become uncovered, so please invoke Allah for me that I may not become uncovered.' So he invoked Allah for her.

In order to gain reward from Allah, One must bare illness with patience:

“I heard Allah's Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) saying, "Allah said, ‘If I deprive my slave of his two beloved things (i.e., his eyes) and he remains patient, I will let him enter Paradise in compensation for them”.

As a Blessing from Allah, in return for illness, Allah wipe off the sins of Patients:

“The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that".

"Fatigue,” here refers to long term illness.

The source of mercy for a Patient is from Allah:

“Usama bin Zaid said that while he, Sa’d and Ubai bin Ka’b were with the Prophet (Pace Be Upon Him) a daughter of the Prophet sent a message to him, saying. ‘My daughter is dying; please come to us.” The Prophet sent her his greetings and added “It is for Allah what He takes, and what He gives; and everything before His sight has a limited period. So she should hope for Allah's reward and remain patient.” She again sent a message, beseeching him by Allah, to come. So the Prophet got up. and so did we (and went there). The child was placed on his lap while his breath was irregular. Tears flowed from the eyes of the Prophet. Sa’d said to him, "What is this, O Allah's Messenger?" He said. "This Is Mercy which Allah has embedded in the hearts of whomever He wished of His slaves. And Allah does not bestow His Mercy, except on the merciful among His slaves”.

When a group of Companions visited the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), he lead them in prayer while sitting down:

“During the ailment of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) some people came to visits him. He led them in prayer while sitting. but they prayed standing, so he waved to them to sit down. When he had finished the prayer, he said, "An Imam is to be followed, so when he bows, you should bow. and when he raises his head, you should raise yours, and if he prays sitting. you should pray sitting." Abu `Abdullah said Al-Humaidi said, "This narration has been abrogated by the last action of the Prophet as he led the prayer sitting, while the people prayed standing behind him”.

This shows the importance of Salah (prayers) in giving religious support for a sick person. This is because prayer is a spiritual connection between the Servant and His Creator.
2:2 Believing that illness is a Divine Will and the Decree of Allah:

Anas Ibn Malik reported, on behalf of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him):

I heard Allah's Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) saying, "Allah said, 'If I deprive my slave of his two beloved things (i.e., his eyes) and he remains patient, I will let him enter Paradise in compensation for them.'"

Ibn Battal said: "Whosoever has been afflicted by loss of sight or loss of limbs should bare this with patience, being thankful and satisfied for what Allah has chosen for him, in order to gain the best reward, which is Paradise" (31).

On the other hand, from the psychological point of view, believing in the Divine Will can ease pain and reduce complaints regarding what has happened to him/her. The Believer will bare such illness with patience and accept what this is the decree of Allah.

Whilst a non-Muslim may have suffered a breakdown or committed suicide due to a lack of faith and unwillingness to accept what has happened (32).

Therefore, the role a spiritual advisor should incorporate reminding the patient that illness is decreed by the Almighty Allah for the benefit of the patient, and should be accepted with satisfaction. A patient must also take any medication prescribed.

2:3 Illness is an expiation for sins:

Imam Al Bukhari wrote a chapter in the Book of Patients named “Sickness is an expiation of Sins.” This indicates the importance of making this known to the patient and his/her family. This will encourage them to be calm and to accept this with positivity, as it is an opportunity to wipe out sins.

Narrated Aisha: “Allah's Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him,) said, "No calamity befalls a Muslim but that Allah expiates some of his sins because of it, even though it were the prick he receives from a thorn” (33).

Also, Narrated Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri and Abu Hurayrah:–

“The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that” (34).

Ibn Hajar said: “Calamity is parallel to the expiation of sins, and will be rewarded if the patient accepts illness with satisfaction” (35).

Imam Al Bukhari reported hadith that supports this view. It is narrated by Ka’b:–

“The Prophet (PBUH) said, "The example of a believer is that of a fresh tender plant, which the wind bends it sometimes and some other time it makes it straight. And the example of a hypocrite is that of a pine tree which keeps straight till once it is uprooted suddenly” (36).

The meaning of this Hadith is that when Allah has decreed something, a believer will submit and surrender. If He/She has been afflicted by something that appears bad, there will be some good in it. Therefore they thank Allah for this test or calamity.

While the non-believers will not accept the calamity or test and will complain. In return, Allah will give him hardship in life and at the time of death (37).

Imam Al Bukhari reported on this topic also.

Narrated Abu Hurayrah:– Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, "If Allah wants to do good to somebody, He afflicts him with trials” (38).
Wiping of sins means to cover up the person or protection from punishment\(^{(39)}\).

### 2:4 Patience is reason for gaining reward and entering Paradise:

Imam Bukhari outlined a chapter in the “The Book of Patients,” called “The Superiority of a person who has lost His Sight,” in this he reported the following Hadith on the Authority of Annas Ibn Malik:

“I heard Allah's Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) saying, "Allah said, 'If I deprive my slave of his two beloved things (i.e., his eyes) and he remains patient, I will let him enter Paradise in compensation for them"”\(^{(40)}\).

Ibn Battal said this Hadith is an evidence that overcoming calamity with patience will result in Paradise. It also shows that our sight is a great blessing from Allah, If this is taken away, a great reward is deserved, which is Paradise\(^{(41)}\).

Also, Imam Bukhari outlined another chapter called “The Superiority of a person who is suffering from epilepsy,” and said: “If a person who is suffering from Épilepsy bares the condition with patience will enter Paradise”\(^{(42)}\).

Furthermore, he quoted: “Ibn `Abbas said to me, "Shall I show you a woman of the people of Paradise?" I said, "Yes." He said, "This black lady came to the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and said, 'I get attacks of epilepsy and my body becomes uncovered; please invoke Allah for me.' The Prophet said (to her), 'If you wish, be patient and you will have (enter) Paradise; and if you wish, I will invoke Allah to cure you.' She said, 'I will remain patient,' and added, 'but I become uncovered, so please invoke Allah for me that I may not become uncovered.' So he invoked Allah for her”\(^{(43)}\).

So, the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) suggested two remedies either to be patient and she will gain Paradise or the Prophet (PBUH) will pray for her to be cured. She chose to remain patient in order to gain Paradise.

This also indicates that when someone is tested and they choose the hardest path, the reward will be greater\(^{(44)}\).

Patience has positive effects on the life of a Believer, such as calmness, peace and courage to carry on with his life, since he considers his life a blessing from Allah the Almighty and leading to a greater reward\(^{(45)}\).

### 2:5 Hope and belief in Allah:

Imam Al Bukhari also wrote a chapter called,“A Patient’s wish for Death.” Al Ayni said “This chapter highlights that one should not wish for death”\(^{(46)}\).

He quotes the following hadith, on the authority of Anas Ibn Malek: “The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "None of you should wish for death because of a calamity befalling him; but if he has to wish for death, he should say: 'O Allah! Keep me alive as long as life is better for me, and let me die if death is better for me””\(^{(47)}\).

Further to this, he quoted another Hadith:

“Narrated Qais bin Abi Hazim: We went to pay a visit to Khabbab (who was sick) and he had been branded (cauterized) at seven places in his body. He said, "Our companions who died (during the lifetime of the Prophet) left (this world) without having their rewards reduced through enjoying the pleasures of this life, but we have got (so much) wealth that we find no way to spend it except
on the construction of buildings Had the Prophet not forbidden us to wish for death, I would have wished for it.’ We visited him for the second time while he was building a wall. He said, A Muslim is rewarded (in the Hereafter) for whatever he spends except for something that he spends on building”

The reason that Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) has forbidden us to wish for death is because it will stop a believer from doing good and gaining reward.

Frankill said: “If a Human Being is worried about his/her life, this will cause hardship.”

If a Muslim implements the above hadith, he will not find such hardship because if he does good deeds, he may increase his good deeds. If he does bad deeds, he may repent to Allah.

Those who are treating a patient should put in mind the above concepts in order to cure the patient and protect him from old age, disease and worry of Death.

2:6 Religious Support is a compulsory duty:

All those involved in treating a patient and there family should try their best to fulfil the needs of the Patient, whether mentally, physically or spiritually. This is because a patient will listen to those offering help, and which will contribute to his recovery, as Ibn Hajar stated.

Imam Al Bukhari wrote a chapter in the “Book of Patients” called “It is compulsory to visit the sick”.

Al Ayni said this includes visiting the patient frequently and asking him about his situation.

Imam Al Bukhari considers this furudalkfayah. However, he also states that it may reach the stage of wajib for some people.

He also quoted in the Hadith:-

“Narrated Abu Muisa Al-Ash`ari: The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and set free the captives”.

“Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib: Allah's Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) ordered us to do seven things and forbade us to do seven other things. He forbade us to wear gold rings, silk, Dibaj, Istabriq, Qissy, and Maithara; and ordered us to accompany funeral processions, visit the sick and greet everybody”.

Section 3 –Methods of Spiritual Guidance in the Sunnah:

3:1 Visiting Patients:

As mentioned previously, there are many methods of offering religious support to Patients when visiting.

Imam Al Bukhari has talked about visiting an unconscious person, visiting of sick men by women, visiting children, visiting a sick Bedouin, visiting a Mushrik. He also mentioned the types of transportation that can be taken to visit the sick. These include riding, walking or sitting with another person on a donkey.

Furthermore, a visitor should prepare for the visit by performing ablution in order to lead the patient in prayer if the time arises. The aforementioned list shows that visiting the sick is one of the ways to deal with different patients.

Imam Ibn Al Qayim said: “There are four groups of people who would benefit from such visits. They are the patient, the visitor, the Patients family and the public in general”.

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When the Prophet (PBUH) used to visit a patient, he would ask “How are you? How do you feel? Would you like anything?” He would also place his hand on the forehead or chest of the patient. He used to say:

“O Allah! Keep me alive as long as life is better for me, and let me die if death is better for me”.
Ibnal-Qayyim said: “This kindness of the Prophet is the best way for cure of the patient”.

3:2 Praying for Patients:

Imam Al Ayni said that Imam Al Bukhari has allocated a chapter called “The Invocation for Patients by the One who pays a visit to Him”.

Aisha Bint Sa’ad: “When the Prophet (PBUH) came to visit my Dad, he said “Oh Allah, Please cure Sa’ad”.

Sa’ad refers to Sa’ad Bin Abi Waqaas, Radhi Allah Anhu.

Narrated ‘Aisha: “Whenever Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) paid a visit to a patient, or a patient was brought to him, he used to invoke Allah, saying, “Take away the disease, O the Lord of the people! Cure him as You are the One Who cures. There is no cure but Yours, a cure that leaves no disease””.

This hadith means a complete cure and full recovery is one that leaves no illness behind.

Imam IbnHajar said: “The Prophet (PBUH) was referring to a complete cure of that specific illness, and not a future one”.

Narrated Ibn Abbas: “Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) entered upon sick man to pay him a visit, and said to him, “Don’t worry, Allah willing, (your sickness will be) an expiation for your sins.” The man said, “No, it is but a fever that is boiling within an old man and will send him to his grave.” On that, the Prophet (PBUH) said, “Then yes, it is so”.

The words “don’t worry” can be translated as a sick patient is a winner in either circumstance. Either he will be cured, or his sins will be forgiven.

Ibn Battal said: “It is from the Sunnah to speak to a patient in order to lift his spirit and as a reminder that his illness is a mercy from Allah SubhanaWaTa’aa and should be observed with patience. This will keep away Shaytan’s thoughts from the patient”.

Ibn Al Qayim said: “The influence of Al Riqiat AlShareiuh will either protect the person from becoming ill or it will cure him after the disease. While the other drugs will cure the patient after he has fallen ill”.

Du’ah or supplication from a psychiatric point of view means that while to human is in a state of weakness or fear or hope will strive towards a Supreme Power, which is Allah (SWT). He is nearer to a person than his jugular vein.

Ibn Hajar said: “If a patient asks how they can combine prayer for cure and achieve expiation of sins, we have advised that prayer itself is an act of worship and will not contradict reward with an expiation of sins. Both of these things are a mercy from Allah”.

3:3 Placing a hand on the head of a Patient to calm him/her:

Imam Al Bukhari reported the following two Hadith that describe how the Prophet (PBUH) placed his hand on the head of a patient in order to make him/her feel better and that someone is taking care of him.
Narrated Sa’d: “I became seriously ill at Mecca and the Prophet (PBUH) came to visit me. I said, “O Allah's Messenger (PBUH)! I shall leave behind me a good fortune, but my heir is my only daughter; shall I bequeath two third of my property to be spent in charity and leave one third (for my heir)?” He said, "No." I said, "Shall I bequeath half and leave half?" He said, "No." I said, "Shall I bequeath one third and leave two thirds?" He said, "One third is alright, though even one third is too much." Then he placed his hand on his forehead and passed it over my face and Abdomen and said, "O Allah! Cure Sa’d and complete his emigration." I feel as if I have been feeling the coldness of his hand on my liver ever since”" (69).

Narrated 'Abdullah bin Mas‘ud: “I visited Allah's Messenger (PBUH) while he was suffering from a high fever. I touched him with my hand and said, "O Allah's Messenger (PBUH)! You have a high fever." Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, "Yes, I have as much fever as two men of you have." I said, "Is it because you will get a double reward?" Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, "Yes, no Muslim is afflicted with harm because of sickness or some other inconvenience, but that Allah will remove his sins for him as a tree sheds its leaves”” (70).

Placing the hand on a patient makes him/her feel better and that someone is taking care of them. At the same time, the visitor might feel the pain and agony that the patient is feeling (71).

3:4 Modelling the style of how Prophets would observe their own pain:

The most effective way to set an example is to set a role model whether for reward as encouragement or punishment to put someone off from doing evil things (72).

People usually copy a role model or become influenced by them due to the love and respect they feel for them (73).

Just imagine if Prophets were a role model for us! Namely the final one, Muhammed (PBUH). in order to keep our patient as the prophet used to do.

Therefore, Imam Al Bukhari wrote a book called “The people most prone to trials are Prophets, and then the most pious people and then the less pious, and so on” He quoted the Hadith:

“Narrated ‘Abdullah Bin Mas’ood: I visited Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) while he was suffering from a high fever. I said, "O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! You have a high fever." He said, "Yes, I have as much fever as two men of you." I said, "Is it because you will have a double reward?" He said, "Yes, it is so. No Muslim is afflicted with any harm, even if it were the prick of a thorn, but that Allah expiates his sins because of that, as a tree sheds its leaves”” (74).

So we can see, from how the Prophet (PBUH) answered, this reward will be given to the one who took him, other Prophets or the pious as an example for patience (75).

He also reported another Hadith:-

Narrated Aisha: “I never saw anybody suffering so much from sickness as Allah's Messenger (PBUH)” (76).

Ibn Battal said:- “Allah allocated hardship and illness for Prophets because they have strong faith. Through this, they will have complete reward” (77).

When Allah tests someone with illness, the more painful it is, the more sins will be expiated (78).

To conclude, the Visitor should remind patients about the Prophets tests of illness, as this will encourage the patient and lift his spirit.
3: 5 Observing the situation of Patients:

The Visitor should notice the situation of the patients, and decide how to approach the Patient. The Prophet (PBUH) noticed the situation of Al Ka’ab, and had a discussion with him, and showed that it is permitted to shave his head while in the state of Ihram because he was ill.

Narrated Ka’ab bin ’Ujara: “The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by me while I was kindling a fire under a (cooking) pot. He said, "Do the lice of your head trouble you?" I said, "Yes." So he called a barber to shave my head and ordered me to make expiation for that”.

Ibn Hajar said: “Imam Al Bukhari quoted this Hadith under the chapter “It is permissible for a patient to say “I am sick,” or “Oh, my head,” or “ailment has been aggravated””. The Prophet noticed Ka’ab’s illness and gave him advice accordingly.

3:6 Sympathy with Patients:

One of the most important ways to deal with Patients is to show him understanding, compassion, feeling and mercy with patients in all their circumstances.

In the previous story concerning Ka’ab, we could see how Prophet (PBUH) felt sorry for Ka’ab and advised him to shave his head in order to get rid of the pain. Also, Imam Al Bukhari quoted the saying of Jabir:-

Narrated Jabir bin `Abdullah: “Once I fell ill. The Prophet (PBUH) and Abu Bakr came walking to pay me a visit and found me unconscious. The Prophet (PBUH) performed ablution and then poured the remaining water on me, and I came to my senses to see the Prophet. I said, "O Allah's Messenger (PBUH)! What shall I do with my property? How shall I dispose of (distribute) my property?" He did not reply till the Verse of inheritance was revealed”.

We can see, therefore, how Prophet (PBUH) felt with Jabir as had fallen unconscious. The Prophet performed Wud’uu and poured the remaining water over Jabir.

Also, when the Muhajireen in Madinah had a fever, including Abu Bakr and Bilal, the Prophet (PBUH) prayed for their recovery.

Also, Imam Al Bukhari wrote a chapter entitled: - “Whoever invokes Allah to remove epidemics and fever”.

This contains the following Hadith:-

Narrated ‘Aisha: “When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) emigrated to Medina, Abu Bakr and Bilal had a fever. I entered upon them and said, "O my father! How are you? O Bilal! How are you?" Whenever Abu Bakr got the fever he used to say, "Everybody is staying alive with his people, yet death is nearer to him than his shoe laces." And when fever deserted Bilal, he would recite (two poetic verses): "Would that I could stay overnight in a valley wherein I would be surrounded by Idhkhir and Jalil (two kinds of good smelling grass). Would that one day I could drink of the water of Majinna, and would that Shama and Tafil (two mountains at Mecca) would appear to me!” I went to Allah's Messenger (PBUH) and informed him about that. He said, "O Allah! Make us love Medina as much or more than we love Mecca, and make it healthy, and bless its Sa and its Mudd, and take away its fever and put it in Al-Juhfa”.

3:7 Answering questions of Patients:

Another way of giving support to patients is to answer any questions regarding his illness, such
as purification, prayer, fasting, will etc. This is what is known as “medical jurisprudence”, or “legal jurisprudence and rules related to Health Professionals” (85).

When the Prophet (PBUH) visited Jabir during his illness, Jabar asked about inheritance.

“Once I fell ill. The Prophet (PBUH) and Abu Bakr came walking to pay me a visit and found me unconscious. The Prophet (PBUH) performed ablution and then poured the remaining water on me, and I came to my senses to see the Prophet. I said, "O Allah’s Messenger (PBUH)! What shall I do with my property? How shall I dispose of (distribute) my property?" He did not reply till the Verse of inheritance was revealed” (86).

Also, when Prophet (PBUH) visited Sa’ad, he asked about his Will.

Narrated Sa’d: "I became seriously ill at Mecca and the Prophet (PBUH) came to visit me. I said, ”O Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) I shall leave behind me a good fortune, but my heir is my only daughter; shall I bequeath two third of my property to be spent in charity and leave one third (for my heir)?” He said, ”No.” I said, ”Shall I bequeath half and leave half?” He said, ”No.” I said, ”Shall I bequeath one third and leave two thirds?” He said, ”One third is alright, though even one third is too much.” Then he placed his hand on his forehead and passed it over my face and ‘Abdomen and said, ”O Allah! Cure Sa’d and complete his emigration." I feel as if I have been feeling the coldness of his hand on my liver ever since” (87).

Section 4 – Communication skills with the Patient and personal qualities for Spiritual Guide:

4:1 Skills of communication with Patients:

Doctors always pay attention to the things they can see, or deal with figures and numbers. However, they do not pay great attention to communication skills (88).

In this section, I will demonstrate some of the skills in the Hadith that were practiced.

First: Positive dialogue with the Patient – The Prophet (PBUH) used to answer queries and fulfil the needs of Patients. We mentioned earlier that the Prophet (PBUH) had a dialogue with a woman who has epilepsy (89).

The Spiritual guide should play the role of listening to the patient, and this is called “positive listening” (90).

Also, in the story of Sa’ad, the Prophet (PBUH) would listen carefully to him and advise him accordingly. He placed his hand on his head and chest and make Du’a for him (91).

The Spiritual leader may not have much to say, but he should give enough time to spend with the Patient and have a dialogue with him.

This contributes a lot to the recovery of the patient (92).

Second: Listening to the complaint of a patients’ pain and uncomfortableness. We mentioned earlier that the Prophet (PBUH) permitted the patient to complain.

Imam Bukhari quoted the following verse:-

Narrated Ayub: “Verily, disease has seized me, and you are the Most Merciful of All Those Who show Mercy”. Chapter 21: Verse: 83

This supports his view that it is permitted to complain. However, IbnHajar disagrees with Imam Bukhari for quoting the complaint of Prophet Ayub because he feels this quote is not appropriate for
this chapter, as it was said a prayer to Allah, not a complaint to people\textsuperscript{(93)}.

Imam Al Bukhari also quoted the saying of Aisha: Aisha, (complaining of headache) said, "Oh, my head!"\textsuperscript{(94)}.

We can see here that no Human Being can complain, including Prophet, the Companions and many Pious people. Complaints that are not permitted are those that are made in objection or hatred towards Allah. But if they are said in order to request people to make Du'a, there is no harm\textsuperscript{(95)}.

Also Imam Al Buhari quoted the Hadith of Ibn Mas'd:

Narrated Ibn Mas’d: “I visited the Prophet (PBUH) while he was having a high fever. I touched him and said, "You have a very high fever” He said, "Yes, as much fever as two me of you may have." I said. "you will have a double reward?” He said, "Yes No Muslim is afflicted with hurt caused by disease or some other inconvenience, but that Allah will remove his sins as a tree sheds its leaves”\textsuperscript{(96)}.

Furthermore, Hadith Sa’ad was quoted\textsuperscript{(97)}.

No one can alleviate pain except Allah, and it is human nature to complain. Nobody can change this. It is permissible to complain, but it is not permissible to say it as a way of not accepting the illness\textsuperscript{(98)}.

Third: Answering Patient and family requests if they ask for someone to help.

One of the skills in dealing with Patients is that if he requests someone to visit him, we should fulfil it.

Narrated Abu ‘Uthman: “Usama bin Zaid said that while he. Sa’d and Ubai bin Ka‘b were with the Prophet (PBUH) a daughter of the Prophet sent a message to him, saying, 'My daughter is dying; please come to us.' The Prophet (PBUH) sent her his greetings and added "It is for Allah what He takes, and what He gives; and everything before His sight has a limited period. So she should hope for Allah's reward and remain patient." She again sent a message, beseeching him by Allah, to come. So the Prophet (PBUH) got up. and so did we (and went there). The child was placed on his lap while his breath was irregular. Tears flowed from the eyes of the Prophet. Sa’d said to him, "What is this, O Allah's Messenger (PBUH)?” He said. "This Is Mercy which Allah has embedded in the hearts of whomever He wished of His slaves. And Allah does not bestow His Mercy, except on the merciful among His slaves”\textsuperscript{(99)}.

So we can see the Prophet (PBUH) answering the request of his Daughter by calling the person she asked to comfort her.

Ibn Battal said: - “It is recommended for the leaders and pious people to visit children who are sick, as this is an opportunity to pray for children and keep the ties with Fathers, and comforting them, in order to help them to overcome this”\textsuperscript{(100)}.

Fourth: Respect the Patients opinion if he/she asks for someone present to leave.

Imam Al Bukhari wrote a chapter entitled “The saying of the Patient “Get up from me”. This is in case something is said to upset the Patient. In this instance, we should respect the patient’s wishes\textsuperscript{(101)}.

This will not be considered as cutting off relations with visitors\textsuperscript{(102)}.

Imam Al Bukhari quoted the following Hadith:-

Narrated Ibn ‘Abbas: “When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) was on his death-bed and in the house there were some people among whom was ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab, the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Come, let me write for you a statement after which you will not go astray." ‘Umar said, "The Prophet (PBUH) is seriously ill and you have the Qur'an; so the Book of Allah is enough for us." The people
present in the house differed and quarrelled. Some said "Go near so that the Prophet (PBUH) may write for you a statement after which you will not go astray," while the others said as `Umar said. When they caused a hue and cry before the Prophet, Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, "Go away!" Narrated 'Ubaidullah: Ibn `Abbas used to say, 'It was very unfortunate that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) was prevented from writing that statement for them because of their disagreement and noise"\(^{(103)}\).

**Fifth:** To avoid argument with the Patient.

Narrated Ibn `Abbas: The Prophet went to visit a sick Bedouin. Whenever the Prophet (PBUH) went to a patient, he used to say to him, "Don't worry, if Allah will, it will be expiation (for your sins):" The Bedouin said, "You say expiation? No, it is but a fever that is boiling or harassing an old man and will lead him to his grave without his will." The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Then, yes, it is so"\(^{(104)}\).

We can see that the Prophet (PBUH) did not quarrel with the Bedouin, but prayed for him. He was conscious that quarrelling may increase the pain.

4:2 The qualities of those giving Religious Support to Patients:

After studying the “Book of Patients,” we can derive the qualities of a person offering Religious Support.

**First:** Knowledge of a Spiritual Supporter.

A Spiritual Supporter is one who should work within Islamic guidelines, as they will help him to offer support on how to deal with people\(^{(105)}\).

They should also be aware of how to give spiritual and mental support, have knowledge of how to handle the patient and Islamic jurisprudence rules. Most importantly, the intention must for the sake of Allah.

Ibn Al Qayim lay down certain conditions to be a Doctor. This includes: the experience of prescribing drugs and handling patients. Therefore, a Doctor must be aware of how to treat patients from both a medical and spiritual point of view.

Ibn Al Qayim considers a perfect Doctor to be one who combines these two\(^{(106)}\).

**Second:** Patience with a sick person.

The Spiritual Guid should try his best to have patience and be considerate because the sick person feels the agony of pain. He should also remain enthusiastic and not loose his temper, and remember that in keeping his patience, he is aiming to gain reward from Allah.

We have previously mentioned a time when the Prophet (PBUH) was patient with a Bedouin\(^{(107)}\).

**Third:** Initiative when giving Religious Support.

Ibn Battal said:- “It is recommended to hasten a visit to a sick person, and offer support, whether riding or walking, bearing in mind he will gain reward from Allah whatever inconvenience he may face on his travel”\(^{(108)}\).

**Fourth:** Giving support to anyone who is in need without discrimination.

The Prophet (PBUH) went to visit a sick Jewish boy who used to serve him, inviting him to Islam and the boy became a Muslim. Also, the Prophet visited his own Uncle Abu Talib when he was a Mushrik\(^{(109)}\).
Ibn Battal said: “It is permissible to visit a Mushrik if there is hope he may become Muslim”\(^{(110)}\). However, Ibn Hajar disagrees with this as he feels we should visit the sick non-muslim from a purely Human basis, regardless of whether he has accepted Islam or not\(^{(111)}\).

Ibn Battal also said: “There is no harm for a Leader to visit one of his citizens, and for a Scholar to visit the ignorant”\(^{(112)}\).

It is permitted for men to visit a sick woman and vice-versa with two conditions: -

The woman should be covered with Hijab, and they should be careful to not to be exposed to temptation or fitnah (talking should be kept to spiritual advice only)\(^{(113)}\).

Imam Bukhari agrees with a man visiting a sick woman and vice-versa, and so spiritual support should be offered to a sick person on a Human basis, regardless of faith, social status, gender race.

Fifth: Utilising guidance as means of Da’wah.

We have previously mentioned that the Prophet (PBUH) visited a sick Jewish boy and his Uncle who was a Mushrik, and utilised the visit to invite them to Islam\(^{(114)}\).

Sixth: Being kind with the Patient.

Imam Ibn Al Qayim said: “The best of Doctors is one who deals with a Patient as if he dealing with a child”\(^{(115)}\).

This is clearly shown when the Prophet (PBUH) visited some of his Companions such as Jabir IbnAdbullah, Sa’ad Bin AbiWaqaas and the Lady with Epilepsy.

Therefore, a Spiritual Guider who works within the framework of Islam, with sincere intentions of pleasing Allah, is a key to hearts\(^{(116)}\).

Conclusion:

After studying the “Book of Patients,” from Al JamihSahih by Imam Bukhari, I have the following findings:-

1) Religious and Spiritual Support means to provide help and care for Patients based on Faith, which contributes to recovery or easing pain.
2) This support is based on believing in Allah, and seeking his reward, being patient, and believing that illness will be ab expiation of sins.
3) There are many ways of giving help and support to a patient by visiting, praying, placing a hand on his head, answering queries and taking the Prophet’s as their example.
4) There are many skills that should be trained when visiting, such as dialogue, good listening, fulfilment of patient needs, not quarrelling and a respect for the opinion of the patient.
5) There are many qualities that a Spiritual Supporter must have. Such as knowledge, patience, kindness and not discriminating.

Recommendations:

1) The researchers recommend further study of the Sunnah for applicable teachings in giving religious support for patients.
2) Both the Faculty of Medicine and Shria’ah, should incorporate a module on religious and spiritual support for teaching their students.

Footnotes:

(1) Ibn al Qayyim, Shams Al Deen, Mohammed Bin AbiBakr, Zaad Al Ma’ad fi HadiKhair Al I’bad, Edited by Shu’aib Al Arnaoot, Muasassat Al Risalah, Beirut, 7th Edition, 1985, Vol. 4, P12
(2) Scholars such as Imam Muslim, Imam Ahmed. Abu Dawood, Al Nasai have combined two book into one, naming “The book of Medicine”


(9) Ibrahim Mustafa and Others, AlmaejamAlwasit, Dar Al Da'wa, Cairo, Vol:1 P:286.


(20) Ibid, P:278.


(24) See AlAyni, Badr Al Diyn, Al Eaynii, Eumdat Al QariSharahSahih Al Bakhari, By Abd Allah Mahmud Muhamad Umar, Dar AlKutub Al Eilmiat, Beirut, No Date, Volume 21, P:228.


(26) Bukhari, Hadith: 5653.

(27) Bukhari, Hadith: 5641.


(29) Bukhari, Hadith: 5655.

(30) Bukhari, Hadith: 5658.


(33) Bukhari, Hadith: 5640.
(34) Bukhari, Hadith: 5641.
(36) Bukhari, Hadith: 5643.
(38) Bukhari, Hadith: 5645.
(40) Bukhari, Hadith: 5653.
(43) Bukhari, Hadith: 5653.
(44) Bukhari, Hadith: 5653.
(47) Bukhari, Hadith: 5671.
(48) Bukhari, Hadith: 5672.
(49) IbnHajar, “Fateh Al Bari”, Volume 10, P:130.
(57) Bukhari, Hadith: 5649.
(58) Bukhari, Hadith: 5650.
(64) Ibid, Volume 10, P:119.

(69) Bukhari, Hadith: 5659.

(70) Bukhari, Hadith: 5660.


(74) Bukhari: Hadith: 5648.


(76) Bukhari, Hadith: 5646.


(80) Bukhari: Hadith: 5665.


(83) Bukhari: Hadith: 5651.

(84) Bukhari: Hadith: 5677.

(85) Al Jani’ah, Al Aalyah, As Soudiah, Li Dirasaat Al Dhiba Al Faqha, 2010, P:11.

(86) Bukhari: Hadith: 5651.

(87) Bukhari, Hadith: 5659.


(89) Bukhari, Hadith: 5652.


(91) Bukhari, Hadith: 5659.


(94) Bukhari, Hadith: 5666.


(96) Bukhari, Hadith: 5667.

(97) Bukhari, Hadith: 5668.


(99) Bukhari, Hadith: 5655.


(103) Bukhari, Hadith: 5669.


(105) As Shanawi, Mohamed, “Bohooth Fi At Tawjee Al Islami Lil Irshad Wa Al Ileage Al Nafsi,” Dar Ghareeb, Cairo, 2001, P245.
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(107) Bukhari, Hadith: 5669.


(109) Bukhari, Hadith: 5657.


(113) IbnHajar, Fath Al Bari, Volume 10, P:118.

(114) Bukhari, Hadith: 5657.
