



## Session 5: Character Development and Islamic Bioethics Summary



### Focus Questions

- What is adab, what are the goals of adab, and how can you relate this to your medical practice?
  - Adab = proper comportment wrt (i) audience and (ii) role
    - Audience: God, patients, families,
    - Roles: Professional Role, Social Role
    - Goal = Excellence and embodiment of virtue
- Background: Practices, Communities and Virtues
  - Recall →
  - Virtues are expressed in the context of a practice (cooperative activity to achieve **internal goods** [goals])
  - Excellence can therefore be exemplified by paragons in that **community of practice (standards)** and even defined by them
  - Don't misunderstand; we have paragons of virtues and exemplars from revelation but there is an additive possibility



#### VIRTUE ETHICS What is a practice?

- Alasdair MacIntyre:
  - "...any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended." (*After Virtue*)

## Focus Questions

- What are the sources of learning adab?
  - Revelation + profession
  - Exemplars:
    - Prophet Isa → by Allah[swt]'s leave
    - Prophet Ayub → towards illness = most merciful of merciful

### VIRTUE ETHICS

#### Virtue Ethics in Medicine

*Adab* relates to crafts, practices

All practices have histories, authorities, that represent the best standards of that practice

Islamic virtue ethics considers moral exemplars in the history of the practice

*The Proper Conduct of the Physician (Adab al-ṭabīb)* by Ishāq ibn Ruhāwī (9<sup>th</sup> century CE)



## A Pietistic Cosmology



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## One's Response begets reality

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَهَّابِ الثَّقَفِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا خَالِدُ الْحَدَّاءِ، عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَخَلَ عَلَى أَعْرَابِيٍّ يَغُودُهُ فَقَالَ " لَا بَأْسَ عَلَيْكَ طَهُورٌ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ". قَالَ قَالَ الْأَعْرَابِيُّ طَهُورٌ، بَلْ هِيَ حُمَّى تَفُورُ عَلَى شَيْخٍ كَبِيرٍ، تَزِيرُهُ الْقُبُورَ. قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " فَتَعَمَّ إِذَا "

Narrated Ibn `Abbas: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) entered upon a sick bedouin in whom he went to visit and said to him, "Don't worry, Tahur , if Allah Will." The bedouin said, "Tahur! No, but it is a fever that is burning in the body of an old man and it will make him visit his grave." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Then it is so."

Sahih al-Bukhari 7470

حَدَّثَنَا عَارِمٌ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَيِّدَانُ أَبُو رَبِيعَةَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ ابْتَلَاهُ اللَّهُ فِي جَسَدِهِ إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُ مَا كَانَ يَعْمَلُ فِي صِحَّتِهِ، مَا كَانَ مَرِيضًا، فَإِنْ عَافَاهُ، أَرَاهُ قَالَ: غَسَلَهُ، وَإِنْ قَبِضَهُ غَفَرَ لَهُ.

Anas bin Maalik has reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "When Allah involves a Muslim in bodily pain then he is credited with a reward for those deeds which he was used to do when he was healthy as long as he is ill. Thus, if Allah gives him healing, He washes him (clean of sins). But, if he causes him to die then he forgives him.

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 501

## Explanatory Framework

- **Illness**
  - Humbling experience → direct one to Allah[swt]
  - Expiates sins
  - Can be means of reward (w/ proper adab)
  - Opportunity for gratitude
- **Are diseases due to one's sins?**
  - Wrong framing



## Centering God's Domain & Human-God Relationship

إِذَا مَرَضَ الْعَبْدُ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَيْهِ مَلَكَيْنِ فَقَالَ انظُرَا مَاذَا يَقُولُ لِعُودِهِ . فَإِنْ هُوَ - إِذَا جَاءَهُهُ - حَمِدَ اللَّهَ وَأَثْنَى عَلَيْهِ رَفَعْنَا ذَلِكَ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ - فَيَقُولُ لِعَبْدِي عَلَى إِنْ تَوَقَّيْتُهُ أَنْ أَدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ وَإِنْ أَنَا شَفَقْتُهُ أَنْ أَبْقِيَهُ لَهُ لَحْمًا خَيْرًا مِنْ لَحْمِيهِ وَدَمًا خَيْرًا مِنْ دَمِيهِ وَأَنْ أَكْفِرَ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ . "

"When the slave is ill, Allah ta'ala sends two angels to him." He said, "They look at what he says to his visitors. If he praises Allah and lauds Him, when they come to him, they take that up to Allah, the Mighty, the Majestic, and He knows best, and He says, 'If I make my slave die, I will make him enter the Garden. If I heal him, I will replace his flesh with better flesh and his blood with better blood and I will efface his evil actions.'"

Muwatta Malik 50:1718

## Insights into the Materials: Islamic Law in Islamic Bioethics Discourse

- Levey, M. *Medical Ethics of Medieval Islam with Special Reference to Al-Ruhawi's 'Practical Ethics of the Physician'*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 57/3 (May 1967). Pg 5-55 (Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2)
- Mundane acts → part of virtue
- Good physician → more effective therapies
- Exemplars from profession
  
- Sartell, E. and Padela, AI. 2015. *Adab and its Significance for an Islamic Medical Ethics*. Journal of Medical Ethics. 41:756-61
- Cycles between being good → doing good → producing good
  
- Padela, A. July 18th 2022, *Character Development and Islamic Bioethics*. Bayan Islamic Graduate School. Chicago, IL

