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*“ ...Indeed there is in the body a piece of flesh which if it is sound then the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt then the whole body is corrupt. Indeed it is the heart.”*

Reported by al-Bukhārī [Eng. Trans. 1/44/no.49]  
& Muslim [Eng. Trans. 3/840/no.3882].

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أمراض القلوب وشفائها

DISEASES OF

**THE HEARTS**

& THEIR CURES

by  SHAYKHUL-ISLĀM  
IBN TAYMIYYAH

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# Transliteration Table

## *Consonants. Arabic*

initial: unexpressed medial and final:

ء '	د d	ض ḍ	ك k
ب b	ذ dh	ط ṭ	ل l
ت t	ر r	ظ ḏ	م m
ث th	ز z	ع '	ن n
ج j	س s	غ gh	ه h
ح ḥ	ش sh	ف f	و w
خ kh	ص ṣ	ق q	ي y

## *Vowels, diphthongs, etc.*

Short:            اَ a      اِ i      اُ u

long:            آ ā      أو ū      إ ī

diphthongs:            أو aw

إِ ay

## IBN TAYMIYYAH

### May Allāh have mercy upon him

He is Aḥmad bin ‘Abdu-l-Ḥalīm bin ‘Abdu-s-Salām bin ‘Abdullāh bin Abū Qāsim ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī Taqī ad-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās bin Shihāb ad-Dīn. He was born in Ḥarrān, an old city within the Arabian Peninsula between Syria<sup>1</sup> and Iraq, on the tenth or the twelfth of the month *Rabi’u-l-Awwal* in the year 661H. He and his family were later forced to flee to Damascus due to the occupation by the Tartars.

He came from a family of scholars, his father and grandfather were both scholars as were three of his brothers: ‘Abdu-r-Raḥmān, ‘Abdullāh and his half-brother, Muḥammad.

During his early studies of Islām, he never ceased to amaze his teachers at the strength of his memory, keen intelligence and depth of understanding. It is said that he was first allowed to give legal verdicts at the age of nineteen and he began teaching at *Dār al-Ḥadīth as-Sukriyyah* at the age of twenty-two.

He became famous for his knowledge of ḥadīth, indeed he

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<sup>1</sup> Ar. *Shām*, in those days represented the areas of Syria, Jordan and Palestine.

was a *Hāfiẓ* (Hadīth Master), and for his knowledge of the Qur'ān and its related sciences, he impressed all with his circles on *tafsīr*. He also attained expertise in *Usūl al-Fiqh* and *Fiqh*, knowledge of the differences of opinions present amongst the scholars, writing, mathematics, history, astronomy and medicine. Many of the scholars of his time testified that he had attained the rank of *Mujtabid*.

He always showed a great concern for the affairs and welfare of the Muslims and this manifested itself greatly in his efforts during the *Jihād* against the Tartars, Christians and *Rawāfiḍah* wherein his displays of bravery, courage and inspiring talks were one of the most important factors in the Muslims victory against their enemies. These efforts won the praise and admiration of many scholars and indeed the ensuing generations of Muslims to this very day.

Aside from the physical *Jihād*, ibn Taymiyyah launched an intellectual struggle against the various deviant sects and heretical ideas of his day. He refuted the *Shi'a*, the People of Theological Rhetoric (*Ahl al-Kalām*) - such as the *Jahmiyyah*, *Mu'tazilah* and many of *Ashā'irah*, the philosophers who promoted the school of the early Greeks (*falāsifa*), the majority of *Sūfi* sects and paths and the adherents of other religions. His criticisms were not based on a lack of understanding, rather he first gained an in-depth knowledge of each of these schools and as such his critique of them was systematic, acute and valid. For example it is said that his refutation of Greek philosophy was one of the most devastating attacks ever leveled against them. His refutation of Christianity was outstanding and his rebuttal of the *Shi'a* completely demolished their beliefs and innovations from root to branch.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> When this is understood, the critique levelled against him by some that 'his learning exceeded his intellect' can safely be relegated to the trash bin.



Needless to say, these refutations, and his very direct methods of refuting, made him many enemies and as a result his life was full of trials and persecutions. His enemies were careful to look for anything by which they could attack him and they eventually found what they were looking for in his works of belief entitled *'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah* and *'Aqīdah al-Ḥamawīyyah*. Due to their total misunderstanding of what he wrote, they accused him of anthropomorphism and had him imprisoned on more than one occasion. Ibn Kathīr mentions that some scholars sat with ibn Taymiyyah to debate with him concerning his *'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah* and the debate ending with their agreeing with him in what he had written.<sup>3</sup> Similarly ibn Kathīr mentions that some scholars debated with him concerning *'Aqīdah al-Ḥamawīyyah* and his replies to their accusations could not be rebutted.<sup>4</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah was again imprisoned because of a legal ruling he gave concerning divorce, and yet again he was later imprisoned for a legal verdict he issued prohibiting making journeys for the purpose of visiting graves. It was during this imprisonment that he passed away.

With regards his personality and worship, he exerted a huge and lasting influence on all who met him and he was known for his worship and glorification of the Islāmic laws, both inwardly and outwardly. His complete reliance upon Allāh can be best summed up in what his student, ibn al-Qayyim, relates from him when he was told that his enemies had plotted to kill him or imprison him,

If they kill me it will be martyrdom for me. If they

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<sup>3</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah wa an-Nihāyah* [Vol. 14, under the heading *'Aqd Majālis ath-Thalātha*].

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Kathīr [14/5].

expel me, it will be migration for me; if they expel me to Cyprus, I will call its people to Allāh so that they answer me. If they imprison me, it will be a place of worship for me.<sup>5</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim himself said,

Allāh knows, I have never seen anyone who had a better life than his. Despite the difficulties and all that expunges comfort and luxury, nay, things completely opposite to them; despite imprisonment, intimidation and oppression, ibn Taymiyyah had a purer life than anyone could. He was the most generous, the strongest of heart and the most joyful of souls, with the radiance of bliss in his face. When we were seized with fear and our thoughts turned negative, and the earth grew narrow for us, we would go to him. No sooner did we look at him and hear his words, all these feelings would leave us to be replaced by relief, strength, certainty and tranquility.<sup>6</sup>

Al-Bazzār said,

I was of those who knew well his habits, he would not talk to anyone unnecessarily after the prayer of Fajr and would remain performing the *dhikr* of Allāh in a low voice which perhaps could just be heard by one sitting next to him; and frequently would he direct his gaze to the sky. This he would do until the Sun had risen high and the time in which it is pro-

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<sup>5</sup> *Nābiyah min Ḥayāh Shaykh al-Islām* [p. 30].

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Wābil as-Sayyib* [p. 69].