

Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (d. 388H) on Contagion



INTRODUCTION

This is a very important contribution from **Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī**¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) in the discussion regarding “contagion” because it clarifies the misconception of those who claim that the Pagan Arabs—as a whole—denied that “contagion” occurs through Allāh’s decree, and that they believed “contagion” moves on its own, outside of Allāh’s creative power and that the answer of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to the bedouin who had a doubt regarding the spread of scabies in his camels was upon this basis.

In other words, when the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) answered the bedouin by saying: “*And who passed it to the first one?*”, he meant to say that just like Allāh caused the first camel to get scabies through His decree then He also caused the rest of the camels to get scabies through His decree, through contagion. This is a

¹ **Al-Sam‘ānī** said: “An Imām from the Imāms of the Sunnah.” **Al-Zahabī** said: “The Imām, ‘Allāmah, Muḥaddith, Traveller (for knowledge).” **Ibn al-‘Imād** said: “He was one of the receptacles of knowledge in his time, a ḥāfiẓ, faqīh, prominent over his associates.” He had some confusion in the subject of the Ṣīfāt due to influence from the Mutakallimīn but he overall, in other major matters of creed he was upon the way of the Salāf. Refer to Shaykh Ḥammād al-Anṣārī’s “Imām al-Khaṭṭābī wa Manhajuhū fil-‘Aqīdah” (Dār al-Waṭan, 1418H).

deficient explanation of the ḥadīth because the bedouin was not disputing the issue of disease occurring through Allāh's decree. He was disputing how the Prophet (ﷺ) could say: “*There is no contagion*” and “*Nothing transmits [what it has] to anything else*” while he sees what he sees with his own camels, that one camel becomes ill first, and then the rest also become ill.

So this is the issue that will be addressed in what follows through the speech of al-Khaṭṭābī similar to what has been explained by **al-Ṭahāwī, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, al-Qurṭubī** and others.

AL-KHAṬṬĀBĪ ON CONTAGION

Al-Khaṭṭābī (رحمته الله) said in “Ma‘ālim al-Sunan”, which is his explanation of Sunan Abī Dāwūd—after citing the two apparently contradictory ḥadīths of Abū Ḥurayrah (رضي الله عنه):

—1. “*There is no contagion, no omen [in the month of Ṣafar], and no omen in the night-owl.*” So a bedouin said: “But what about camels which are like gazelles, and a camel with scabies mixes with them and gives them scabies.” He (ﷺ) said: “*And who passed it to the first one?*”

—2. “*Let not the owner of sick camels pass them by the healthy camels of another.*”

He said:²

His saying: “*There is no contagion*”, he means by it that nothing transmits [what it has] to anything else such that harm comes from its direction. Rather, it is through the decree of Allāh, the Majestic and Mighty, and from His prior ordainment. For this reason he said: “*So who passed it to the first one?*”

² Ma‘ālim al-Sunan (published by Muḥammad Rāghib al-Ṭabbākh, 1352H) 4/233-234).

He is saying that the first camel to get scabies among the camels, there was no camel with scabies before it which could pass the disease to it through contagion. Rather, when the scabies first appeared in the first camel, it was by the ordainment and decree of Allāh. So it was likewise with the disease that appeared in all of the camels thereafter.

The meaning of what al-Khaṭṭābī has said above will become clear in what follows of his speech further below.

But for now, to prevent any faulty interpretation being made, let's go through the speech above piece by piece:

Al-Khaṭṭābī first said:

His saying: “*There is no contagion*”, he means by it that nothing transmits [what it has] to anything else such that harm comes from its direction.

As explained by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr³ and others, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “*Nothing transmits (what it has) to anything else*” which means that disease is not “transmitted” or “passed on” by anyone. Rather, it is created afresh by Allāh (ﷻ) **through His decree**, which means that Allāh brings together the factors for disease causation in each and every person through creational systems of cause and effect at the appointed time and place that are in His prior knowledge.

Thus, no one “transmits” or “passes on” disease such that harm comes from the direction of that person. Disease is an ‘araḍ (incidental state, attribute), it arises due to multiple factors that have to come together for a person. So this is the first point, about the nature of disease, it is not a noun-entity, it is multicausal,

³ Refer to our article: “**Ibn ‘Ābd al-Barr on Contagion**”: [ibn-abdal-barr-contagion.pdf](#) — 9 October 2020.

multifactorial, and **Allāh creates it in each person afresh**, no person “transmits” what he has to anyone else.

Then he said:

Rather, it is through the decree of Allāh, the Majestic and Mighty, and from His prior ordainment.

Meaning through creational systems of cause and effect. However due to people confusing **coincidence** or **association** or **correlation** with **causation** on account of ignorance, people are prone to invoking contagion as a simplistic explanation and ignoring the true cause(s) of disease which the ill were subject to through Allāh’s decree. And this was the nature of the Pagan Arabs, as it was of other nations too.

He then said:

For this reason he said: “*So who passed it to the first one?*” He is saying that the first camel to get scabies among the camels, **there was no camel with scabies before it which could pass the disease to it through contagion**. Rather, when the scabies first appeared in the first camel, it was by the ordainment and decree of Allāh. So it was likewise with the disease that appeared in all of the camels thereafter.

The meaning is very clear.

Since the first camel in a herd to get sick did not require another camel to “transmit” or “pass” the disease to it, it means that there were **factors of disease causation** that came upon that first camel. And if that is the case, then since all the other camels are in the same location, in the same climate, with the same environment and all that it contains, inclusive of contamination

with ticks, parasites and the likes, then all the camels have been exposed to the same factors. Hence, they will start falling ill around the same period of time, all by the decree of Allāh.

So this is what is meant when it is said that these camels fell ill **“by the ordainment and decree of Allāh”**. Meaning through creational systems of cause and effect which Allāh brought together for those camels at the appointed time and place which are in His prior knowledge. It had nothing to do with contagion, and mixing between the sick and healthy camels was purely coincidental. In other words there is presumption and exaggeration at play in the mind of the bedouin who is confusing **association, correlation, and coincidence** with **causation**.

With this first part of his speech clarified, let us now continue with the rest of al-Khāṭṭābī’s words, through which this will become clearer:

And as for his saying: *“Let not the owner of sick camels pass them by the healthy camels of another”*, the meaning behind this prohibition is not that the ill pass on disease to the healthy through contagion, but that if the healthy get sick by Allāh’s permission and decree, there will occur in the soul of the owner that that happened from the direction of contagion, and it will put him to trial and put him into doubt regarding his affair. So he ordered its avoidance for this meaning.

Meaning that what Allāh had already decreed to occur through the various cause effect mechanisms of disease that are part and parcel of al-qadar al-kawnī, the creational systems of cause and effect—such as unhealthy climate, toxic environment, dirty water, unwholesome or contaminated pasture and so on—when that

coincides with mixing between animals, then a person will wrongly think that this was because of “contagion”.

So to prevent this from happening— to protect people from trials and corruption in creed, from thoughts, feelings, statements and behaviours that enter into minor shirk—he advised them to keep the sick camels away from healthy camels when they take water or graze in the field.

This way, in each person’s experience, when his herd does become ill, there is no room for presumptions and for confusing between coincidence and causation. He will now know for sure that his herd became ill through the decree of Allāh, meaning through creational systems of cause and effect, and not through contagion. Thus, the circumstances which led Pagans and Disbelievers of previous nations to invoke and believe in contagion—by confusing coincidence with causation—are prevented.

This is from the great foresight and tremendous wisdom in the Prophetic guidance in closing the doors to presumptions, exaggerations and errors in causation.

It can be said: “**So and so passed the disease to so and so.**”

However, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “*Nothing transmits [what it has] to anything else*”, rather it is Allāh who creates the disease afresh in the second person, through His decree, His creational systems of cause and effect.

So now, this is the realm of wording, the realm in which minor shirk can take place. Similar to when one says:

- “Whatever Allāh willed and what you willed”, and
- “This is from Allāh and you”, and
- “Had it not been for Allāh and you”, and
- “Thieves would have come had it not been for the dog”

—and so on, and these are from the explanation of Ibn ‘Abbās (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) of the saying of Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ).

فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أُنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“So do not set up rivals for Allāh (in worship) while you know (that none deserves to be worshipped but Him alone).” (2:22).

Related by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in his tafsīr.

And the angle of minor shirk here is ascribing a cause (sabab) to other than its Creator whilst ignoring the Creator of the cause (musabbib), which is Allāh.

So when this language is used—something we find among the Naturalists, Materialists, Disbelievers who are deniers of rubūbiyyah—it leads to exaggeration in the asbāb, and we move in the direction of the Naturalists and also the Mu‘tazilah. And here it would be a good idea to read the article on al-Qurṭubī and contagion because he alluded to this matter.⁴

And when this is the case for true and real causes, how then, when they are imaginary, unproven causes?!

In other words, if saying “Whatever Allāh willed and what you willed” and “Had it not been for Allāh and you” is technically true, but enters into minor shirk because it contains a degree of promotion and exaggeration in sababiyyah (causation) through the use of the conjunction “and”, then how will it be when the statement being made is not true at all, but pure conjecture—such as what we find in speech about contagion and claiming that people “transmit” and “pass on” disease.

To make this point further, the CDC says about leprosy:

⁴ “Al-Qurṭubī (d. 656H) on Contagion”: [qurtubi-contagion.pdf](https://www.qurtubi-contagion.pdf) —12 October 2020.

—“Prolonged, close contact with someone with untreated leprosy over many months is needed to catch the disease. **You cannot get leprosy from a casual contact** with a person who has Hansen’s disease [leprosy] like: Shaking hands or hugging.”

And in the Merck Manual:

—“ **Casual and short-term contact does not seem to spread the disease.** Leprosy cannot be contracted by simply touching someone with the disease, as is commonly believed. Health care workers often work for many years with people who have leprosy without contracting the disease.”

And a UK leprosy charity called Lepra states:

—“The transmission of leprosy **is still not entirely clear**, though it **is widely thought** to be passed on by breathing in infected respiratory droplets.”

And a family doctor website explains:

—“Doctors **aren’t exactly sure** how leprosy is spread. Leprosy is not very contagious. You can’t catch it by touching someone who has the disease... Doctors **believe** that leprosy might be passed from person to person.”

And al-Qurṭubī (رحمته الله) said:

“So this is similar to his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) command of fleeing from the leper. For we, even though we believe that leprosy is not contagious, we still find aversion in our souls and a dislike of that.”⁵

We do not wish to go into a lengthy diversion about the true causes of leprosy here. The point from the above is that there is zero evidence of leprosy being “contagious” in the common, ordinary sense of the word, and all we have are:

⁵ Al-Mufhim (Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1417) 5/624.

“Beliefs, widely held thoughts, unsure doctors and transmission that is still not entirely clear”—not even after thousands of years of experience with the disease!

But we will just say here that bacteria are not primary causes of disease, they are on the scene of disease doing something, but they are not its primary cause.

Now, given the above, let's say in India someone called Zayd visits his relative, 'Amr, who lives in a nearby town and has leprosy. Zayd spends a day with him but the only physical contact they had was shaking hands and hugging on first meeting with each other. A few months later, leprosy develops in Zayd. There is zero evidence that mixing with 'Amr was the cause of leprosy. Further, since the majority of the cases of leprosy in the world are in India, and since the bacteria alleged to cause leprosy is harmless in 95% of all people as we find being mentioned by the CDC, then **the true, primary causes of the disease must lie elsewhere** and not the bacteria itself. Otherwise just about everybody would have leprosy.

Thus, if it is said:

“Amr gave, passed, transmitted leprosy to Zayd.”

Then there are a number of issues here:

1. First, this is pure speculation and conjecture. It is confusing association, correlation and coincidence with causation and making something a cause that is not a cause. This is the entry route of minor shirk.

2. Secondly, in terms of speech, you are ascribing something to 'Amr which is actually an action of Allāh through other ways and means, through the actual causes of leprosy which are multifactorial.

Thus, 'Amr did not “pass on, transmit, give” his disease to anybody in the reality of the affair, and leprosy is not contagious

through ordinary routine mixing, and Allāh is the one who created the disease of leprosy in Zayd afresh, through His decree, through the actual causes of the disease.

These causes can be ultimately reduced to a few categories: **specific types of nutritional deficiency, malnutrition, toxicity and “immunosuppression” (or lack of vitality)—even if we are unaware of all the specific details of the causes in each case.**

These factors lead to death of cells in certain, specific areas of the body. Bacteria then come on the scene as waste-consumers, cleaners and recyclers. Bacteria show up wherever there is dead tissue or build up of morbid materials. If the underlying causes continue, then the disease will progress over time, and the bacteria will also increase, as they have a greater amount of dead or morbid material to work on.

In the false, inaccurate germ theory model of disease, bacteria are wrongly considered to be the primary cause of the disease, when they simply come to the scene of disease just like an ambulance comes to the scene of an accident or firemen come to a burning building. The greater the fire, the greater the number of firemen and ambulances.

As for those who affirm contagion, they will say:

“Mixing is a known cause of the transfer or spread of disease, because we see it with our eyes, so we are simply affirming the *asbāb* which are part of Allāh’s decree.”

And to this the response is that you have no proof at all and neither do the scientists and doctors of today that **casual contact and ordinary mixing** is a cause of the alleged “transmission” or “spread” of disease generally speaking and of leprosy in particular in our example, **exclusive to the combined factors through which the first person became ill (with leprosy or otherwise).**

This is mere conjecture.

It is simply an assumption that has been built upon confusion between **association**, **coincidence** and **causation**.

As we have made clear over and over, since the start of these discussions in March 2020, we are very precise in our language when speaking about factual realities, and we have always sought to eliminate ambiguity and generalisation in speech, because this is where confusion arises and mistakes are made.

To explain this, let us present another scenario:

Zayd visits his relative, ‘Amr who has a severe case of leprosy. Zayd has an accident and there is a large wound on his leg. ‘Amr, treats that wound, because it is a matter of severe emergency. However, he has leprosy on his skin, and some of the crusty pimples and dead skin fell into the wound of Zayd. This now is “inoculation” of toxic, morbid material which can find its way into the blood supply, tissues and nervous system.

Now if Zayd lacked vitality—due to other factors from Allāh’s decree—and his body was susceptible, then he may develop no symptoms, mild symptoms, or leprosy some time thereafter if the inoculation overwhelmed his body’s capacity for efficient, timely detoxification, and other conditions and circumstances were present enabling this to happen.

So here, we would say:

1. Allāh (ﷻ) created **a fresh instance of leprosy** in Zayd through His decree and inoculation was among the means of fresh disease creation, conditioned with individual susceptibility which arises through other factors from Allāh’s decree. Ordinary, routine contact, “mixing” **with all its vagueness and ambiguity**, is not a cause of these things. This is what Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (رحمته الله) explained in his speech on the subject. This is what allows

coincidence, association to be confused with causation, for exaggeration to then take place in the causes and the invoking of “contagion” when it did not exist.

2. ‘Amr did not “transmit, pass on, send” his instance of leprosy, because disease is an ‘araḍ established in a body and because the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “*Nothing transmits (what it has) to anything else.*” Thus, no person transmits his hunger to another, and no person transmits his trait of generosity to another, and no person transmits **his instance of disease** to another.

3. Leprosy does not have any inherent ability of transmission, it is a state in a body which requires multiple factors in order to arise. Thus the statement: “Leprosy—or any other disease—spreads from person to person”, is ambiguous and we would avoid it, while some people may speak with this and see nothing wrong with it, such as those who affirm contagion.

But this is from the angle of being careful and precise in speech, such that the ignorant and common-folk are not led to believe that leprosy or any other disease is contagious by its inherent nature (bil-ṭabʿ)—regardless of whether they believe it is because Allāh made it so, as this is still not true. Allāh made quenching thirst an inherent property of water, but He did not make it an inherent property of any disease to be “contagious”.

4. We do not treat “inoculation” as contagion, it is a separate subject matter. By contagion we intend exactly what the Prophetic Sunnah intends:

Exaggeration in the presumed causality of “mixing”—in all its vagueness and ambiguity—with no evidence to eliminate the workings of other primary factors in disease causation, confusing coincidence with causation, and the construction of ideas, thoughts, feelings, statements and behaviours on top of

such exaggeration and ambiguity in causation which enter into the realm of minor shirk.

5. We can cite the speech of Ibn al-Qayyim highlighted previously which supports what we say, and this is even while Ibn al-Qayyim is of the view of affirming contagion. He made a statement:

قد يكون سببا يخلق الله تعالى فيه المرض

[Mixing] can sometimes be a cause **through which Allāh creates the disease** [in the healthy].⁶

So if Allāh “**creates the disease**” in the next person, then it is the creation of **a fresh instance of disease**, and no disease instance was passed on by anybody to anybody. We say Allāh creates disease afresh and disease does not “transmit”, a person does not “transmit” or “pass on” disease to another.

The moment you start using this language of “transmitting”, “passing on”—which is something found in the other view by necessity—then you are opening the door which the Prophet (ﷺ) closed.

You lead people to think that “contagiousness” is an inherent property of the disease itself, this is the way the disbelievers speak, and this then leads people to think, speak and act in a certain way which resembles what those disbelievers are upon of exaggeration.

Next, it is here that al-Khaṭṭābī illustrates the point that has been made above and in many previous articles:

He says:

⁶ Ḥāshiyah Tahdhīb Sunan Abī Dāwūd (10/290).

And it is plausible that the [disease]] came from the direction of the water and pasture. The camels would have found it to be unhealthy for them [making them sick] (الماشية فتستوبله). And then when [other camels] take from the same water, they would also be afflicted by a similar disease. Then the people—**on account of their ignorance**—would call this “contagion” whereas it was the action of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) through the mediating influence of [the disease causing mechanisms He created] in nature, and Allāh knows best.

The meaning of (استوبل) is (استوخم), which means to find something unwholesome, noxious, unhealthy, disagreeable. This can relate to air, climate, food and drink. It is said: “This land is wabilah”, meaning unhealthy, noxious. It is also said about water, “wabī” and “wabil”, meaning, noxious and unhealthy.⁷

This is the same word that is used in the ḥadīth of the ‘Uranites, those who accepted Islām and found the climate of Madīnah to be unhealthy for them, the same word is used (فاستوبلوا المدينة), so they sought permission from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to leave Madīnah—during an outbreak of disease—in order to seek medicinal treatment.

Once the above is clear, then here are two scenarios which explain the meaning of the two apparently conflicting ḥadīths al-Khaṭṭābī cited at the beginning.

—1. In a herd of camels, one of them becomes sick due to contamination of the water or unhealthy pasture. Or mites were present in the environment and found their way on to the skin and one camel starts showing signs of scabies because it also had poor

⁷ Refer to Lisān al-‘Arab, p. 4755.

vitality due to malnutrition.⁸ The other camels were also subjected to the same causative factors of disease, however, due to individual variation in vitality, the camels do not all become sick at the same precise time. It happens over some days or longer. So the owner of the camels thinks that the first camel “transmitted” or “passed on” the disease to the other camels and affirms contagion.

What he has done is to confuse **coincidence** and **association** with **causation**. The mixing between the camels was incidental to the true causes of the illness.

—2. A man’s camels become sick because they drink contaminated water, or graze in a pasture that is unwholesome, unhealthy, or they become malnourished and have also picked up mites from their environment and scabies appears in them.

Now if it so happens that the owner of healthy camels is grazing them and letting them take water from the same location, then his camels are being subject to the same disease causing factors. They are consuming the same unwholesome water and the same pasture which might not be agreeable to them, or because they have been in the same unhealthy or contaminated environment.

They will also become ill at some point.

However, as these camels are grazing and drinking, the owner of the sick camels comes along and lets his camels graze or take water at the same time in the same place.

This will lead to the situation where both owners of camels think that healthy camels subsequently becoming ill was because of contagion, because of mixing between their camels.

⁸ We have explained in previous articles that scabies or scabies requires poor “immune” status of the host for successful penetration of the skin by ticks and mites which are ordinarily in the environment already.

So what has happened is that they have confused **coincidence**, **association** and **correlation** with **causation**. Mixing was purely incidental to the true underlying causes of disease which all the animals were subjected to in a given location and time.

To further illustrate: We do not say:

“Getting wet is contagious” when it rains, because the rain has enveloped every person in a given location and time. No one “transmitted” or “passed on” wetness to anybody. Everyone who did not take cover from the rain, or have waterproof clothing at the time, their bodies will become wet. “Wetness” is not “transmitted” or “passed on” by any person. The cause of “wetness” enveloped all people who were susceptible, meaning who had not taken cover and was not wearing waterproof clothing. The rain fell in a western part of a large town, where the first people outside got wet, and then it moved eastwards to envelope the rest of the town. We can say here that people got wet not through “contagion”, through mixing with each other, a presumed cause, but due to Allāh’s decree. Meaning that He brought the causes—downpour of rain in a given location which envelopes a population—at the precise moment that is in His prior knowledge of all that is to occur. We do not say that the first people who got wet in the western part of the town, passed on wetness to the rest through “contagion”.

Now in this similitude we have given, rain is **an obvious, visible cause of the effect**. It is a simple **one to one causal relationship**, so long as a person has not taken cover and is not wearing waterproof clothing, he or she will get wet, if it is a downpour.

But when it comes to disease, the cause(s) may not be so obvious. In fact the true underlying cause(s) of disease, and its

apparent spread—from the contagionists point of view—may remain unknown for a very very long time.⁹

Thus, the easy explanation is “contagion” wherein coincidence and association are confused with causation.

We repeat again what we summarised earlier about the current “scientific knowledge” about the “transmission” of leprosy by way of example, all that we have are:

“Beliefs, widely held thoughts, unsure doctors and transmission that is still not entirely clear”—not even after thousands of years of experience with the disease!

So here we can return to what al-Khaṭṭābī said at the very beginning:

For this reason he said: “*So who passed it to the first one?*” He is saying that the first camel to get scabies among the camels, there was no camel with scabies before it which could pass the disease to it through contagion. Rather, when the scabies first appeared in the first camel, **it was by the ordainment and decree of Allāh**. So it was likewise with the disease that appeared in all of the camels thereafter.

The meaning of “**it was by the ordainment and decree of Allāh**” is that it was through the actual causes of disease, those ways and means that are being ignored, not the ambiguous cause of “mixing” which has been presumed and exaggerated in.

From the above it is clear that in situations of disease outbreaks, **there is a very large scope** for this type of confusion about the true causes of disease to arise and for confusion between

⁹ As for the claim of viruses causing disease, then this is unproven and virology is a pseudoscience, a wholly fraudulent enterprise.

association and causation to occur in people's minds. Especially when the false and inaccurate germ theory model of disease has come to dominate medicine.

This can be illustrated with diseases such as **pellagra**, **beriberi** and **scurvy**, once considered “contagious” and caused by an alleged “germ” until their true causes were identified, which are **chronic vitamin deficiencies**.

So everyone who had such a vitamin deficiency, will succumb to these disease states. In these cases, each instance of disease has been created afresh for each person through the decree of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), and no one “transmitted” their instance of disease to anyone else because as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: “*Nothing transmits (what it has) to anything else.*”

We can illustrate our points further through a piece written on cholera by a water treatment company:

Cholera is an acute, diarrhoeal illness caused by infection of the intestine with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. **A person may get cholera by drinking water or eating food contaminated with the cholera bacterium. The disease can spread rapidly in areas with inadequate treatment of sewage and drinking water. The cholera bacterium may also live in the environment in brackish rivers and coastal waters.**

Cholera cases and deaths were officially reported by WHO, in the year 2000, from 27 countries in Africa, 9 countries in Latin America, 13 countries in Asia, 2 countries in Europe, and 4 countries in Oceania. In the same year some 140,000 cases resulting in approximately 5000 deaths were officially notified at WHO. **Africa accounted for 87% of these cases.**

Note the following:

1. Cholera is a disease which occurs in places where there is a lack of clean water, lack of sanitation, poverty and malnutrition. People drinking from contaminated water can fall ill, some severely, if they lack vitality, due to factors of poverty and malnutrition. Thus, various factors of disease causation envelope a population in a particular place.

2. When there is a cholera outbreak, **it is because a large number of people have been subjected to the same causes of the disease around the same time and they were all individually susceptible due to lack of vitality.** They all drank from the same contaminated water, or ate from the same contaminated food and due to having poor nutrition and immune status because of poverty and malnutrition, the disease was severe. If rotten, contaminated meat is cooked and distributed to people in a village, and they fall ill, they did not “catch food poisoning” from each other. Nobody passed on or transmitted “food poisoning” to anyone. They were subject to the same underlying cause of the illness. If a mother who ate from this food also fed it to her child and the child fell ill, the mother did not “pass on” or “transmit” anything to her child. The child was inoculated with toxic, morbid material and **a fresh instance of disease** was created in the child through Allāh’s decree.

3. If Chris was healthy, without disease, and defecated in a stream and many people drank from that stream, the one who defecated clearly did not “pass on” or “transmit” disease to the people who drank from it and who became ill, because he himself was not ill. But even if he was ill with cholera and the same thing

happened, then again, he did not “transmit” or “pass on” his instance of disease which is established with his body as an ‘araḍ (incidental attribute). The people who drank from the stream **were inoculated with morbid, toxic, waste material and fresh instances of disease were created in them** by Allāh’s decree.

4. Yes, from an observational point of view in these types of scenarios, a certain type of language may be spoken with:

“The disease spread rapidly to many inhabitants of the city.”

Conceptually (in the mind) this is true, but the reality underlying such a statement is that many inhabitants fell ill because they were all subject to its causes, in this case, contaminated water. It is the cause(s) of disease that spread, not disease itself. All that is happening is the fresh creation of many instances of disease through Allāh’s decree—meaning through His creational systems of cause and effect which enveloped and surrounded a group of people in specific location and time.

No one is “passing” their instance of disease to anyone else. No “instance” of disease is roaming or spreading around.

When we say:

“Allāh brings disease to members of a population through His creation of each and every instance of disease by enveloping and surrounding each person with its causes—including prior individual susceptibility—such that His decree for each person or animal is actualised in accordance with His prior knowledge”

then all ambiguity and dubiosity is removed.

However, the contagionist view will refer to this as “contagion”, and say that “it is by Allāh’s decree”, but without providing:

—evidence that casual, routine “mixing” **was the actual cause** of the “spread of disease” and

—evidence that all of those who fell ill were not enveloped by the same disease causing factors as each other.

For example, in a heavy industrialised region where toxic fumes are released and smog is heavy and thick through much of the year, especially if it is in low valley region, people will be getting respiratory illnesses and pneumonias, especially the elderly. This is typical in certain areas of **China, Italy and Iran**.

Now in a particular year, we might have a larger incidence of respiratory illnesses, flus and pneumonias among the elderly. This is because constant pollution damaged their lungs over many long years and there is accumulated dead tissue in the lungs that needs to be broken down and expelled.

The contagionist view will invoke “contagion” and blame it on a bacteria or “virus”. However, bacteria and “viruses”¹⁰ are not actually the primary root causes of the disease, they are involved in the disease management and resolution process, acting as waste-consumers, waste-recyclers, waste-transporters, communications messengers.

As this is taking place, a person will experience symptoms as dead, morbid, waste materials are processed and expelled from their body and new cells and linings are generated. The symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose and so on are part and parcel of this healing phase mechanism.

For healthy people, they will easily bear the burden of this process and will suffer a mild illness. The elderly and chronically ill

¹⁰ Cellular breakdown products, genetic fragments and proteins that are released when a cell undergoes apoptosis, or which are involved in the management of that process are incorrectly labelled as “viruses” and claimed to be the cause of illness. This is the error being made by the virologists in their pseudoscience of virology.

and the “immunopathological” are likely to get severe disease because their bodies cannot handle this burden.

Now in the above scenario, where there are excess hospitalisations and deaths from pneumonia above what is usual in a particular year, there are many reasons that can explain this:

- the pollution levels increased significantly that year, or
- there were more elderly people in that region due to long term demographic trends, so a larger incidence of disease occurred as the elderly have worn out, impaired organs as would be expected,
- the quality of the food and water in that region is compromised because of toxicity and deficiency in the soil,
- the constant smog in the area reduces the Vitamin D status of the population, especially among the elderly who spend more time indoors.

So we can go on and on and provide multiple reasons for these excess deaths. No need to invoke a “virus” and “contagion”. But, in this scenario, it is very easy to invoke contagion through mere **association and coincidence** while ignoring the true causes.

It can be claimed that a new invisible and deadly virus has appeared and caused this illness. However, this is completely false and is nothing more than a fabrication. It is invoking an imaginary cause while dismissing obvious and known causes.

Unlike our similitude for “rain” and “wetness”, in these types of situations we no longer have a one to one causal relationship. The affair is more complicated and some of the causes may be more obscure and in the background. Some of them completely invisible, such as low Vitamin D and Zinc status and lack of vitality in the food. So here we come back to what al-Khaṭṭābī explained:

| And it is plausible that the [disease]] came from the direction of

the water and pasture. The camels would have found it to be unhealthy for them [making them sick] (فتستوبله الماشية). And then when [other camels] take from the same water, they would also be afflicted by a similar disease. Then the people—**on account of their ignorance**—would call this “contagion” whereas it was the action of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) through the mediating influence of [the disease causing mechanisms He created] in nature, and Allāh knows best.

5. Moving on, let’s say a disease-free man called Matt put his hand in some dirt contaminated with faeces and then, without washing his hands, he pulled out a slice of bread and gave it to his friend called Boris, who then became ill after eating the fecally contaminated slice. No “contagion” took place here. No disease has “spread” or been “transmitted”. Rather, a fresh instance of disease has been created through inoculation.

Further, if Matt actually had disease and did not wash his hands properly after a bout of diarrhoea, and then he pulled out a pasty and gave it to Boris, who then ate it and got inoculated with the fecal material on the pasty, he may fall ill. Once again Matt did not “transmit” his disease instance to Boris. No disease was “passed on”. A fresh disease instance was created in Boris.

So from the above examples, the affair should be clear. This is a matter of precise language, avoiding ambiguity and avoiding statements that comprise exaggeration in the *asbāb* and making something to be a cause that is not a cause in actual reality.

This does not entail any negation of the scientifically proven and validated *asbāb* (created ways and means) as the contagionist might argue.

Rather, it shows the strict requirement of true and valid evidence for claims of disease causation¹¹ that are often made through the vagueness and ambiguity of “mixing”—especially in the modern era when the disbelievers are playing with people’s intellects through their pseudosciences, lies and exaggerations and Muslim doctors have been greatly affected by this.

CLOSING NOTE ABOUT VIRUSES

A revival has taken place in the exaggeration of the Pagans and Disbelievers in the matter of contagion through the false, inaccurate germ theory of disease. Particularly as it relates to what are mislabelled as “viruses”. We have spoken about this in detail in past articles.¹²

This has brought a worldwide resurgence of the thoughts, feelings, statements and behaviours which are those of the Pagans and Disbelievers in their exaggeration in the matter of contagion. This is undeniable, and it can be clearly seen in the behaviour of people, Muslim and non-Muslim, wherein they fear perfectly healthy people and do deeds that are baseless in science, medicine and exceed the limits of revelation.

As for what are labelled as “viruses”, they are either **cell debris, transport vehicles** and/or **communications messengers** which are created by cells when they are put under heavy stress. They play a role in healing phase mechanisms, in the expulsion of waste, morbid materials and once they have fulfilled their role, they are “shed” from the body.

¹¹ Note that the methods and tools of microbiology such as “RT-PCR tests” do not prove “transmission” of disease, and this has been discussed elsewhere.

¹² We have always made a distinction between bacteria and “viruses”, both have their own separate discussion. Bacteria are living entities and what are labelled as “viruses” are not. Both have been misunderstood as primary agents of disease within the germ theory model of disease.

Unlike bacteria, “viruses” are not “living”. There is no such thing as “live virus” or “dead virus”. Likewise, there is no such thing as “contagious virus”.

There is much pseudoscience in virology.

Colds, flus and flu-like illnesses are seasonal in nature and are in-built healing phase mechanisms for the expulsion of toxic, morbid materials from the body and regeneration of compromised mucosal linings in the respiratory tract.

Symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing and so on are all biologically meaningful and all play a role in the resolution of the crisis.

Colds and flus are not caused by “viruses”. Rather, “viruses” are on the scene, playing a particular role in this cleansing and regeneration process whenever it is triggered in a person on account of certain factors.

When their role has been fulfilled, they are shed by the body alongside the waste, morbid materials, in fragmented form. They are not the root cause of disease but are participants in the resolution of the disease, operating as **system-wide transport vesicles and communications messengers**. Healthy people will experience mild discomfort during this healing phase whereas the elderly and chronically ill will be subjected to heavy disease burden because of reduced vitality.

What is found in samples from the nose, throat and lungs is debris, a hotch-poth of genetic material, proteins, cell walls and the broken down leftovers of dead cells, bacteria and so on. The detection of genetic fragments and their use as surrogate markers for evidence of “viruses” is mere conjecture in the false and inaccurate germ theory of disease.

Colds and flus cannot be “caught”, there is no “bug” going around. The claim of the disbelievers that “viruses” circulate as

“invisible enemies” and similar type of speech in this topic—built upon **jahl** (ignorance) and **ghuluww** (exaggeration)—is false. It branches off from their speech about evolution.

Unfortunately, Muslims have been affected in this subject matter, something that is evident: Excessive, exaggerated fear, confusing association with causation, treating perfectly healthy people, let alone sick people, as omens, falling for the lies and propaganda of the disbelievers, and doing actions that have next to no relation to actual reality.

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