



## An Occupied Space Cannot Contain Two Opposites

By Imam Ibnul Qayyim al Jawziyyah

if the heart is occupied with loving and believing in falsehood, then it has no space for loving and accepting the truth.

For a space to accept what is being put in it, it has to be emptied of the opposite. The same way this is relevant with individuals and objects, it is also true for beliefs and wills. So, if the heart is occupied with loving and believing in falsehood, then it has no space for loving and accepting the truth. Just like a tongue is busy uttering what does not have benefit, then its owner will not be able to utter what has benefit for him except if he stops talking about what is useless. Also, if the different body parts are busy doing what is not obedience then it is not possible to keep them occupied in doing what is obedience except if he (the owner) frees them of the opposite. In the same way, a , wanting him, longing the heart full of loving other than Allah, wanting Him, longing to meet Him except by emptying it (the heart) from attachment to anything other than him (Allah). And the tongue cannot move to remember Him nor can the body parts move to His service except if he (the owner) frees them from mentions and servicing other than Him. So if the heart is full of occupation with creation and sciences that do not have benefit then there is no space for being occupied with Allah and knowing His Names, Attributes, Laws. And the secret of that is that the Isghaa (listening in concentration) of the heart is like the Isghaa (listening) of the ears, so if he listens to other than the Hadeeth (meaning speech, words, subject) there will be no room to listen to or understand the Hadeeth of Allah. Just like if, he is inclined in love towards other than Allah then he would have no room to incline in love towards Allah. If the heart utters other than the remembrance of Allah then it will not have any space to utter His remembrance by using the tongue. And that is why we find in an authentic narration from the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam):

**“It is better for your mouths to be full of pus until it makes it go bad than to be full of poetry.” [1]**

So he made it clear that a mouth can be full of poetry and therefore it also becomes full of doubts, fictions, and unexisiting measures. Also the sciences that have no benefit, jokes, comedies, stories and so on. If the heart is full of that, then when the truths of the Quran, and the sciences that can make it experience its full function and happiness, come to him, it will not find any space for itself and no acceptance (from it), so it bypasses it (the heart) and moves to another place. If you give advice to a heart full of its opposite, it will not find a way in and (the heart) will not accept it. It does not enter inside by it only passes by briefly and not from the inside. That is why it was said: “clean your heart from other than Us, and you will find Us. For our Highness is compatible with every clean

heart and patience is a chest for the treasure of being associated with Us. He who makes the chest compatible wins its treasure.”

Footnotes:

[1] Narrated by Sa’ad Ibn Abee Waqqaas Saheeh Muslim, Kitaabush Shi’ir ( Book of poetry) (27/5610).