

224718 - Treating waswasah by seeking refuge with Allah from the Shaytan and ignoring it

the question

I suffer from waswas (whispers from the Shaytan) having to do with the might of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, and the idea that He has power over all things, as strange and illogical thoughts come to my mind that I try to suppress by invoking the power of Allah, but then I think that Allah is not able to do such things. Because of that, whispers come to my mind suggesting that I have become a disbeliever, and I do not know how to rid myself of this problem. I hope that you can advise me and guide me.

Detailed answer

If you have a tank from which water is leaking through a tap, then the solution is not to mop up the water that has been leaked; rather the solution is to shut off the tap firmly, so as to stop the water leaking.

This is what is required of you now. It will not do you any good if you get an answer to the two minor issues mentioned in your question, because the train of thought will never stop, and the Shaytan's tank of waswas is full and will never run out. Your tap is open, so when will those problems ever end?

The solution is to strive to put an end to that waswas, which can be achieved by doing two things:

1.

Seeking refuge with Allah, may He be exalted, from the accursed Shaytan, and constantly remembering Allah and reciting Quran, especially Soorat al-Fatihah, al-Baqarah, al-Mu'awwidhat, and Ayat al-Kursiy, and doing that as much as you can.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{And if there comes to you from Satan an evil suggestion, then seek refuge in Allah. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing.} [Fussilat 41:36]

{And say, "My Lord, I seek refuge in You from the incitements of the devils,

And I seek refuge in You, my Lord, lest they be present with me."} [al-Mu'minoon 23:97-98].

The Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "I enjoin you to remember Allah, for the likeness thereof is that of a man who is hotly pursued by the enemy until, when he comes to a strong fortress, he barricades himself inside to protect himself from them. Similarly, a person cannot protect himself against the Shaytan except by remembering Allah." Narrated by at-Tirmidhi (2863); classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh at-Tirmidhi.

2.

Ignoring that waswas completely and not thinking about it or focusing on it, and not looking for a solution or answer to it. That is what the Shaytan wants from you; he wants you to focus on his whispers so as to make your life miserable and spoil your religious commitment and worldly affairs.

The Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) summed up these two matters in a single hadith. When he was asked about some of these whispers that come to a person, he said: "let him seek refuge with Allah and stop (such thoughts)." Narrated by al-Bukhari (3276) and Muslim (134).

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), "let him seek refuge with Allah and stop (such thoughts)", what is meant is: if these whispers come to his mind, let him turn to Allah, may He be exalted, to ward off the evil thereof from him, and let him turn away from thinking about that, and let him understand that this thought is one of the whispers of the Shaytan, who is only trying to corrupt and tempt him.

So let him turn away from listening to his whispers, and let him hasten to cut them off by focusing on something else. And Allah knows best. End quote.

Al-Khattabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The meaning of this hadith is that when the Shaytan whispers such things, if the person seeks refuge with Allah from him, and refrains from thinking too much about it, it will stop. This is different from the case if a human being tries to confuse you with such thoughts, because in that case you can silence him by presenting evidence or proof. The difference between them is that the human being presents his doubts in the form of questions and answers, and the interaction is limited to that, so if you present your proofs, you can silence him.

But as for the Shaytan, there is no end to his whispers. Rather every time binding proof is established, he moves to something else, until he ends up confusing the person. We seek refuge with Allah from that. End quote.

Ibn Hajar, the Shafi'i faqeeh, said with regard to dealing with waswasah, in his book al-Fatawa al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubra (1/149), in response to a question about whether there is a remedy for the disease of waswasah:

He replied: There is an efficacious remedy for it, which is to ignore it completely, regardless of whatever uncertainty there may be in one's heart. If the individual does not pay any attention to it, it will not persist; rather it will go away after a short while, as is the experience of those who are guided.

But if he pays attention to it and lets this waswas control him, then it will continue to increase until it makes him like one who is insane, or even worse, as we have seen in the case of many of those who have been faced with this problem and who listened to confusing ideas and the devils who promote them.

There is a report in as-Saheehayn which supports what I have mentioned, as it says that whoever is faced with waswasah, "let him seek refuge with Allah and stop (such thoughts).

So reflect upon this efficacious remedy which was taught to his ummah by the one who did not speak on the basis of whims and desires.

You should understand that whoever is deprived of that has been deprived of all goodness, because waswasah definitely comes from the Shaytan, and the accursed one has no aim except to make the believer fall into the swamp of misguidance and confusion, to spoil his life and make him distressed and anxious, until he brings him out of the fold of Islam without him realising. **{Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy.}**
[Fatir 35:6]. End quote.

Thus it should be clear to you that the whispers of the Shaytan cannot be stopped by looking for a response to them; rather they can only be stopped by seeking refuge with Allah, may He be exalted, and ignoring them.

We ask Allah, may He be exalted, to grant you refuge from the accursed Shaytan.

And Allah knows best.