

91408 - Repentance of an Apostate

the question

One of the brothers came to me one day expressing regret and feeling ashamed of himself because of his bad behaviour towards Allah – this is the best that he could call it himself – because one day in a fit of anger towards his fiancée he reviled Allah – we ask Allah to keep us safe and sound. He came to me in a state of regret and told me that he had shamed himself, and now he felt too ashamed even to pray. He is – praise be to Allah – a person who is religiously committed. I hope that you can tell us how to advise him, and explain the shar’i (religious) ruling on what happened to him and how he may expiate for that if expiation is required.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Undoubtedly what your friend did is bad behaviour towards his Lord, may He be glorified and exalted. His Lord is the One Who created him in the best form and guided him to the true religion and honoured him with intelligence, hearing and sight, and then he reviled Him and insulted Him?! If this was done with regard to any human who had honoured him in some insignificant worldly matters, that would be counted as a bad attitude and bad behaviour, so how about with Allah, may He be exalted, and there is no comparison at all between the honouring and kindness of a fellow-human and the honouring and kindness of the Creator, may He be exalted.

This reviling puts a person beyond the pale of Islam and makes him an apostate. There is no difference on this ruling among the scholars.

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Ibn Qudamah al-Maqdisi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Whoever reviles Allah has committed an act of major kufr/disbelief (which puts him beyond the pale of Islam), whether he was joking or said it in earnest. The same applies to anyone who mocks Allah, may He be exalted, or His signs, Messengers or Books. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“If you ask them (about this), they declare: ‘We were only talking idly and joking.’ Say: ‘Was it at Allah, and His ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that you were mocking?’”

[9:65]

Al-Mughni.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Reviling Allah or His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is inward and outward kufr (disbelief), whether the one who reviles them believes that it is haram (unlawful) or regards it as permissible, or he is unaware of the ruling. This is the view of the fuqaha (jurists) and all the ahl al-sunnah (followers of the prophetic way) who say that faith consists of words and deeds.

Al-Sarim al-Maslool (1/513).

In al-Mawsoo’ah al-Fiqhiyyah it says:

The fuqah are unanimously agreed that whoever reviles Allah, may He be exalted, is a kafir (disbeliever), whether he is joking, serious or making fun.

It also says:

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The fuqaha are unanimously agreed that whoever reviles Islam or the religion of the Muslims is a kafir.

Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Reviling the deen (religion) is one of the worst of the major sins and the greatest of evils. The same applies to reviling the Lord, may He be glorified and exalted. These are two of the gravest things that nullify Islam and are means of apostatizing from Islam. If the one who reviles the Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, or reviles the deen is a Muslim, then he becomes an apostate from Islam thereby, and he becomes a kafir. He should be asked to repent and if he repents (all well and good), otherwise he should be executed on the orders of the authorities via the sharee'ah (religious) court. Some of the scholars said: he should not be asked to repent, rather he should be executed because his crime is so great. But the more correct view is that he should be asked to repent so that Allah may bless him with guidance and he may adhere to the truth. But he should be punished by flogging and imprisonment so that he will not go back to such a great crime. Similarly, if he reviles the Quran or the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or any other Prophet (peace be upon them), he should be asked to repent and if he repents (all well and good), otherwise he should be executed. Reviling the deen, reviling the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and reviling the Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, are all things that nullify Islam. The same applies to mocking Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), or Paradise or Hell, or the commands of Allah such as prayer and zakah (paying poor-due). Making fun of any of these things nullifies Islam. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“If you ask them (about this), they declare: ‘We were only talking idly and joking.’ Say: ‘Was it at Allah, and His ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that you were mocking?’

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Make no excuse; you disbelieved after you had believed.”

[9:65-66]

We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound.

Majmoo’ Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baz.

And he (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Everyone who reviles Allah, may He be glorified, in any way, or who reviles the Messenger Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or any other Messenger in any way, or reviles Islam or criticizes it, or mocks Allah or His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), becomes a kafir and an apostate from Islam if he claims to be a Muslim, according to the consensus of the Muslims, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: ‘Was it at Allah, and His ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger that you were mocking?’

Make no excuse; you disbelieved after you had believed”

[9:65-66]

The great scholar Imam Abu’l-‘Abbas ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) explained the evidence concerning this issue in his book al-Sarim al-Maslool ‘ala Shatim al-Rasool (“The unsheathed sword against the one who reviles the Messenger”). The one who wants to learn more about the evidence on this issue may refer to this book, as it is very useful and its author is a great scholar who had vast knowledge of shar’i (religious) evidence, may Allah have mercy on him.

Majmoo’ Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baz.

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In the answer to question no. [42505](#) you will find the fatwa (verdict) of al-Shaykh al-'Uthaymeen on the ruling on reviling Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and reviling the deen.

Secondly:

Although the sin that your friend has committed is very great and the rulings concerning it are very strict, Allah has opened the gate of repentance to the one who wants to turn back from his sin and wants to repent and seek forgiveness. He should not despair of the pardon and forgiveness of Allah. That is what the shaytan (devil) wants from the sinner and apostate. Yes, he should feel regret for his sin, but it should not become a barrier between him and Allah that prevents him from repenting and seeking forgiveness.

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: O ‘Ibadi (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” [39:53]

It was narrated from Abu Moosa (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah holds out His hand at night to accept the repentance of those who have sinned during the day, and He holds out his hand by day to accept the repentance of those who have sinned at night - until the sun rises from its place of setting.”

[Muslim].

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It was said to al-Hasan al-Basri: One of us feels too shy before his Lord to ask forgiveness for his sin then go back to it, then ask forgiveness then go back (to his sin)? He said: The shaytan wishes

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that he could achieve that with you. Do not tire of seeking forgiveness.

And it was narrated that he said: I think that this is the attitude of the believers - i.e., every time a believer sins, he repents.

Jami' al-'Uloom wa'l-Hikam.

Our advice to him is to repent and regret what he did, and to do a lot of righteous deeds and strive to be better after repentance than he was before he committed this major sin, and Allah accepts the repentance of the one who repents.

And Allah knows best.