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COURSES • WEBINARS

# Fiqh of **WASWASA** & OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER



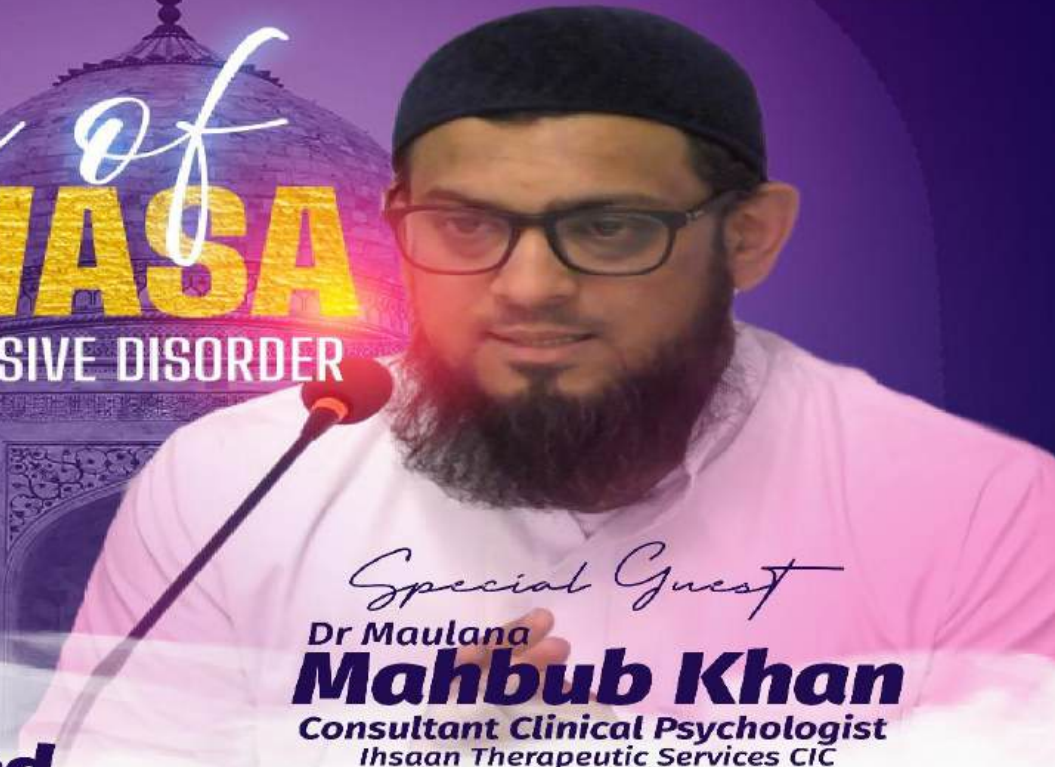
with **Mufti**

**Abdul Waheed**

Senior Researcher JKN Fatawa

**26** | JANUARY  
Sunday | 2025

2pm-4pm **RAJAB 1446**



*Special Guest*

Dr Maulana

**Mahbub Khan**

Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Ihsaan Therapeutic Services CIC

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**WEBINAR** **via Zoom** > 

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YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

# Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
2:00pm	Introduction	Mufti Abdul Waheed
2:05pm	OCD & Waswasa – Psychological Perspective	Dr Maulana Mahbub Khan
<b>2:55pm Break – Asr Salah (10 minutes)</b>		
3:05pm	The Fiqh of Waswasa	Mufti Abdul Waheed
4:00-4:15pm	Q&A and Concluding Remarks	Dr Maulana Mahbub Khan Mufti Abdul Waheed



# What will you learn in this Session?

1. Understanding the interplay of OCD and waswasa from the psychological and the Shariah perspective.
2. Practical steps to managing and eventually healing oneself from OCD and waswasa.
3. Applied real-life case studies to dealing with waswasa and OCD from the medical and Shariah perspective.



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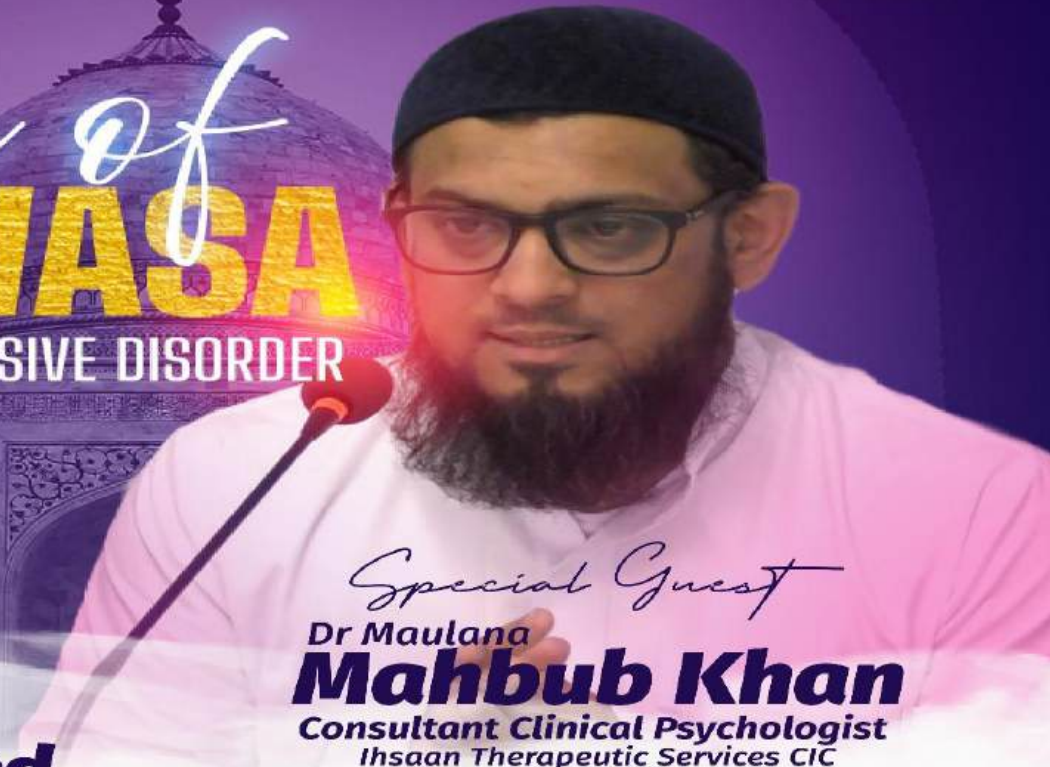
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# Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and Waswasa

DR MAHBUB KHAN

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CONSULTANT CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

TEACHER AT JKN

IHSAAN .ORG.UK



# Today we shall cover

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- Introduction
- Understanding distressing thoughts and whispers of the shaitan
- Understanding OCD
- Community psychology approach
- How can we help ourselves and others
- Incorporate some case examples as we go through
- Specialist referral
- Break 10 minutes
- Mufti Abdul Waheed presentation
- Q&A



# Ground rules

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Maintain confidentiality - e.g. use made up names

Look after yourselves

Respect differences

Allow each other space to share

Any difficulties - send a message individually to myself/Mufti sab



# Understanding distressing thoughts and compulsions

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We all experience negative thoughts/whispers of the shaitan - can sometimes be distressing

People can commonly experience compulsions - checking windows, repeating a unit of prayer

This can be seen on a spectrum

Diagnosis of a mental illness - pros/cons

Depression, anxiety disorder - OCD

Co-morbidity - what do we treat first?

Is it OCD? - Autism, brain injury - can lead to similar symptoms





# Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)

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Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is a common mental health condition where a person has obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours.

Can be a useful diagnosis to understand when distressing thoughts/compulsions become very strong and **interferes with life significantly**.

An obsession is an unwanted and unpleasant thought, image or urge that repeatedly enters your mind, causing feelings of anxiety, disgust or unease

For example, thoughts of doing a bad act, kufr, talaq

A compulsion is a repetitive behaviour or mental act that you feel you need to do to temporarily relieve the unpleasant feelings brought on by the obsessive thought.

For example, someone with an obsessive fear of being burgled may feel they need to check all the windows and doors are locked several times before they can leave their house.

Manuals for diagnosis used by professionals - e.g. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Version 5 (DSM-V)



# To explore

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How have you helped people (yourself) with

- distressing thoughts
- those finding it difficult to manage whispers of the shaitan
- those with OCD?

What did you find helpful?

What did you find difficult?

Type your feedback



# Explanatory Power of an Islamic Model of the Self - Ihsaan

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An Islamic model for understanding human experiences has greater explanatory power that can capture the holistic experiences of those in psychological distress.

Fundamental differences between religions in terms of beliefs in God, Angels, Jinn, Satan, parents returning as spirits etc - but these beliefs are part of religions more generally.

## Examples

Distressing thoughts can be more easily externalised - waswasa of Shaitan

External voices - Jinn



# Normalisation

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## Quran

Surely we will test you with a bit of fear and hunger, and loss in wealth and lives and fruits, and give good tidings to the patient.

(Surah Al Baqarah, V155)

## Hadeeth of the Prophet (saw)

Ibn Abbas told how a man came to the Prophet (saw) and said: “I have thoughts of such a nature that I would rather be reduced to charcoal than speak about them.” He replied, “Praise be to God who has reduced (the devil) to no more than evil promptings.” Abu Dawud

Thoughts are not sinful



# Quran verses/Hadeeth in helping people

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Use as appropriate, careful not to overuse and use out of context

May not be appropriate to use explanations of specific verses/hadeeth for clients in distress

Focus on general principles - in a conversational context using your counselling skills

## **Use general principles**

Islam is between hope and fear - focus on hope/forgiveness

Allah tests those who are closest to Him - Prophets (Peace be upon them all) and companions (ra) of the Prophet (saw) were tested the most

After difficulty there is ease



# What can help 1

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Occupation - 'The idle mind is the handiwork of Satan'

Understand the context and balance of activities

Ta'awwudh (Muslim) - once only not in constant response to the waswasa e.g. in relation to doubts of faith

Change in diet - Reduction of hot foods (nuts/chicken/dates) and eat more vegetables

Increasing exercise/away from urban areas

Take steps forward e.g. Marriage - don't wait for feeling perfect

Behavioural focus not a cognitive focus

**Careful NOT to mention - STOP thinking about it**



# Prayer for doubts

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36. When Shaytān places doubts regarding one's faith

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ أَمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ

[A'ūdhu-billāhi-minashaytānir-rajeem - Āmantu-billāh]

**“I seek refuge in Allāh from Shaytān, the accursed.  
I believe in Allāh.” (Muslim)**



# Exercise - STOP thinking!

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Try your best for the next 2 minutes to try your very best not to think of a pink elephant

Feedback





# What can help 2

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Waswasa during Salah - learn new Surahs and practice them in Salah

Social life in the real world and the digital world

Use of internet

Studying of basic fiqh e.g. not knowing fardh of wudhu, rulings in relation to managing doubt - join a class/ask an Imam

Community - use of less water for wudhu etc

Careful not to keep giving the person re-assurance

Halting studying of fiqh or certain subjects e.g. studying Atheism or Dawah activities



# Surahs for protection/Durood Shareef

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- Mu'awwizatain- Protection from whispers of Shaitan, evil eye, Jinn and Black Magic.
- Sayyidah Aishah (ra) reports that whenever the Holy Prophet (saw) recited at night , he would recite Surah Al-Ikhlās, Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas. He would then blow on to his palms in a manner that some saliva would also reach them. He would then rub his palms over his blessed face, then the front part of his body and finally as much of his remaining body as he could. He repeated this three times. (Bukhari)
- Recite once after Zuhr, Asr and Isha AND 3 times after Fajr and Maghrib. Surah Al-Ikhlās, Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas.

(Abu Dawud)

Recitation of durood shareef/salutations on the Prophet Muhammad (saw)



# Specialist referrals

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Use of medication - GP/psychiatrist

Herbalist

Imam/Ifta department e.g. Talaq

Spiritual healer/Raqi - Ruqya

Shaykh - embark on a spiritual journey

Mental health service

OCD - Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)/medication

Autism/LD - maybe more suited to a counselling/psychodynamic approach

Counselling/Psychotherapy underlying trauma

Working together

e.g. Imam and CBT therapist working together - Ihsaan



# CBT and anxiety

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CBT is widely accepted as the treatment of choice for anxiety disorders – NICE Guidelines for GAD, Social phobia, OCD.

CBT for anxiety includes a combination of different elements such as graded exposure, **cognitive restructuring** (addressing catastrophising, overgeneralization, mind reading), **exposure and response prevention**, relaxation, mindfulness, and use of distraction.

NICE Guidelines for OCD (NICE, 2005)

Use of self help materials - efficacy limited in clinical populations, best used as a therapeutic tool alongside a therapist - see further reading - Islamic adaptation



# Ihsaan Therapeutic Services CIC - [ihsaan.org.uk](http://ihsaan.org.uk)

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Community Psychology service

**Provides specialist psychological therapy** - e.g. OCD  
adaptation of CBT within an Islamic Model of the Self

**Teaching, training and research-** Specialist training for  
practitioners, Al Balagh e.g. Level 1 Islamic Psychology and  
Counselling

**Community events and health promotion** - webinars, peer  
support, talks at community venues - e.g. masjids

**Therapy** - can self refer or via a professional - [ihsaan.org.uk](http://ihsaan.org.uk)

**GP or self refer to statutory mental health service (NHS)** -  
Ihsaan can provide consultation to the therapist



# Further reading/resources

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- Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's Sustenance of the Soul - The cognitive behaviour therapy of a ninth century physician - Translated by Malik Badri. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- DSM V - <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm>
- Keshavarzi, H, Harfi, S, Elzamzamy, K, Khan, F & Kaban E. (2022). The Islamic Workbook for Religious OCD (waswasa). Swansea: Claritas Books.
- NICE (2005) - Obsessive-compulsive disorder and body dysmorphic disorder: treatment. Clinical guideline [CG31]Published: 29 November 2005.  
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg31>
- Saiful, I (2010). Dua for Beginners. Bradford:JKN Publications
- Veale, D & Willson, R (2005). Overcoming Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. London: Constable & Robinson.
- Overcoming series CBT self help books and other CBT books

<https://overcoming.co.uk/37+b601/Books>

<https://overcoming.co.uk/37/Books>

- CBT self help leaflets - free to download

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>



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Asr Salāh Break  
for 10 minutes



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# Fiqh of Waswasa & OCD

## *Shariah Principles*

Presented by  
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# Fiqh of Waswasa

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## *Content*

*Significance of the Topic*

*Legal Definition of Waswasa*

*Common Reasons for Waswasa*

*Analysing the Stages of the Thought Process*

*Quranic and Prophetic Advices*

*Legal Maxims*

*Rulings Specific to OCD & Waswasa Patients*

*Spiritual Recommendations By Shaykh Ashraf Ali Thanvi (ra)*

*Case Studies*



# 1. Significance of the Topic

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1. To address epidemic predicament of OCD and waswasa affecting the Muslim community.
2. Underlying reasons why people suffer from OCD and waswasa.
3. To educate in managing their personal worship, beliefs and other Shariah related aspects of life.



# Exercise Questions & Case study

1. How often do you suffer or know someone who suffers from OCD and waswasa?
2. What drives you to delve into your misgivings?
3. Do you ever feel that Allāh is punishing and angry with you?
4. Do you ever feel that Allāh won't accept your worship?

## Case Study Exercise

Zaid constantly assumes there are urine drops on his clothes. He is not certain but fears that if he does not repeat his wudhu, his Salāh will not be accepted. He repeated his wudhu but was still unsure. What would you advise Zaid to do?

Shaykh Ashraf Ali Thanvi (ra) said;

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*“Whisperings are like an electric wire. If you hold a live wire to pull it towards you, it will shock you. If you hold it to move it away from you, it will still shock you. It is best not to touch it at all – neither to draw it towards you nor move it away from you. This is the way of acquiring safety from whisperings and fears – i.e. do not even pay any attention to them; neither to draw them towards you nor to drive them away from you.”* (Ashraf al-Sawanih, vol 2, p. 357)

He also said;

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*“A seeker becomes worried because he thinks that whisperings are created in the heart. **This is not the case. It is Satan who casts them from the outside.**”* (ibid)

# 1. Legal Definition of Waswasa

LITERAL MEANING  
ACCORDING TO THE JURISTS

الْوَسْوَسَةُ وَالْوَسْوَسُ لُغَةً: الصَّوْتُ الخَفِيُّ مِنْ رِيحٍ وَخَوْهِ.  
وَالْوَسْوَسَةُ وَالْوَسْوَسُ - بِالْكَسْرِ - حَدِيثُ النَّفْسِ. قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعَلْمُ مَا  
تُوسُّوسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ﴾. وَحَدِيثُ الرَّجُلِ صَاحِبِهِ بِصَوْتِ خَفِيِّ، وَقَالَ الْفَرَّاءُ: وَسَّوَسَ الرَّجُلُ إِذَا اخْتَلَطَ  
كَلَامُهُ وَدُهَشَ، وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ مَا رُوِيَ عَنْ عَثْمَانَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: "أَنَّ رِجَالًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ  
صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حِينَ تُؤَيَّبُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَزَبُوا عَلَيْهِ، حَتَّى كَادَ بَعْضُهُمْ يُوسَّوسُ، قَالَ  
عَثْمَانُ: وَكُنْتُ مِنْهُمْ" يُرِيدُ أَنَّهُ اخْتَلَطَ كَلَامُهُ وَدُهَشَ لِمَوْتِهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Subtle sound (or voices) coming from the air or otherwise.

Waswasa (pl. Wasaawis)

*"Verily we created mankind and (fully) cognizant what his heart whispers it."* (Surah Qaaf: 16)

(Example) A man whispering in his speech and is baffled. The companions experienced misgivings and whisperings after the prophet's demise including Sayyiduna Uthman (ra).

(Mawsooatul Fiqh al-Kuwaytiyyah)

# 1. Legal Definition of Waswasa

TECHNICAL MEANING  
ACCORDING TO THE JURISTS

الأول: الوسوسة: بمعنى حديث النفس، وهو ما يقع فيها من التردد هل يفعل أو لا يفعل  
الثاني: الوسوسة بمعنى ما يلقيه الشيطان في روع الإنسان.  
الثالث: الوسوسة وهي ما يقع في النفس مما ينشأ من المبالغة في الاحتياط والتورع حتى إنه  
ليفعل الشيء، ثم تغلبه نفسه فيعتقد أنه لم يفعله فيعيدة مرارًا وتكرارًا، وقد يصل إلى حد أن  
يكون الشخص مغلوبًا على عقله  
الرابع: الموسوس هو المصاب في عقله إذا تكلم بعبر نظام

1. Murmuring with oneself, being indecisive about whether you did something or not.
2. What Shaytan casts in the heart of human beings
3. The misgivings that transpire in the heart to extreme limits of precaution, knowing that he did something but is overwhelmed with negativity and therefore repeats the same action repetitively. This takes the person to the point of becoming rationally overwhelmed.
4. The afflicted person speaks ineffectually. (Mawsooatul Fiqh al-Kuwaytiyyah)

## 2. Common Reasons

الإِحتِيَاظُ - Overly cautious

شُبُهَاتٍ - Doubts

الْوَرَعُ - Prevention

التَّرَدُّدُ - Indecisiveness

# 3. Analysing the Stages of the Thought Process – Ex of Listening to Music



-الهاجِسِ

Spontaneous thoughts that come and go e.g. hypothetical thought of listening to music



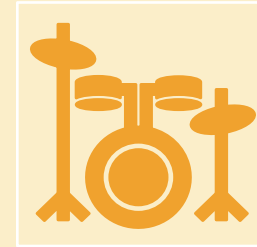
-الْحَاظِرِ

Provocation of thought e.g. thinking about listening to music



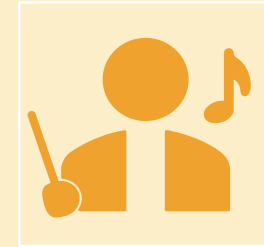
- حَدِيثُ النَّفْسِ

Talking with himself – Contemplation e.g. contemplating on listening to music



- اِهْتَمُّ

Inclination or strong feeling of the heart e.g. his heart is now settled on listening to music



- الْعَزْمُ

Firm Resolution e.g. his heart is now firmly fixed on listening to music





وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ (97) وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبَّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ  
(98)

*“Say (O Muhammad) O my Lord, I see refuge with you from the incitements of the devils, and I (also) seek refuge with you they be present.”*

[Surah Muminoon 23:97]

The Messenger of Allāh (saw) would recite,

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ السَّمِيعِ الْعَلِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

[Tafseer Qurtubi].

## 4. Quranic and Prophetic Advices

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لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

**“Allāh does not bear any soul responsible except to their (natural) capacity.” [Surah Baqarah 2:286]**

Meaning, Allah does not burden anyone with responsibilities beyond their natural capacity out of affection, compassion, kindness and favour towards His servants (Tafseer Qurtubi)

**The Messenger of Allāh (saw) said;**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَجَاوَزَ لِأُمَّتِي عَمَّا وَسَوَسْتُ، أَوْ حَدَّثْتُ بِهِ أَنْفُسَهَا، مَا لَمْ تَعْمَلْ بِهِ أَوْ تَكَلَّمْ

*“Verily Allāh has pardoned my Ummah the misgivings or the occurring thoughts itself (in the heart) so long as he does not enact it or (clearly) speak of it. [Sahih Bukhari, No: 6664]*

**The Messenger of Allāh (saw) said;**

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: جَاءَ نَاسٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَسَأَلُوهُ: إِنَّا نَجِدُ فِي أَنْفُسِنَا مَا يَتَعَاظِمُ أَحَدُنَا أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ بِهِ. قَالَ: «أَوْ قَدْ وَجَدْتُمُوهُ» قَالُوا: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: «ذَلِكَ صَرِيحُ الْإِيمَانِ»

Some companions came to the Messenger of Allāh (saw) and asked. “*Verily we experience things in our hearts that each of us find it acute to speak of.*” he said, “*Do you indeed experience it?*” They said, “*Yes.*” He said, “*This is clear faith.*” [Sahih Muslim, No: 209]

**The Messenger of Allāh (saw) said;**

مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا وَقَدْ وُكِّلَ بِهِ قَرِينُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَقَرِينُهُ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ. قَالُوا: وَإِيَّاكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: وَإِيَّايَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَانَنِي عَلَيْهِ فَأَسْلَمَ فَلَا يَأْمُرُنِي إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ "

*“There is no one amongst you except a qarin jinn and a qarin angel has been appointed over him.”. They said, “And you too O Messenger of Allāh?” He said, “And me too except that Allāh has assisted me over it and has submitted to me so he only commands me of good things.” [Sahih Muslim, No: 2184]*

The devil appointed is called waswas and the angel appointed is called Mulhim. (Mirqat al-Mafateeh)

عَنْ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ: أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَهُ فَقَالَ: إِنِّي أَهْمُ فِي صَلَاتِي فَيَكْبُرُ ذَلِكَ عَلَيَّ  
فَقَالَ لَهُ: امْضِ فِي صَلَاتِكَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَنْ يَذْهَبَ ذَلِكَ عَنْكَ حَتَّى تَنْصَرِفَ، وَأَنْتَ تَقُولُ:  
مَا أَتَمَمْتُ صَلَاتِي.

A man once asked Qasim ibn Muhammad, “*Verily I am (constantly) confused about my Salāh which causes burden on me.*” He said to him, “*Continue with your Salāh for it (though) shall never depart from you until you complete your Salāh and then you say I have not completed my Salāh.*”  
[Muwatta Malik]

## 5. Legal Maxim

الْيَقِينُ لَا يَزُولُ بِالشَّكِّ

- Conviction is never shaken by doubt

مَنْ شَكَّ هَلْ فَعَلَ شَيْئًا أَمْ لَا؟ فَالْأَصْلُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ

- If someone doubts whether he has done something or not then in principle he hasn't.

Ex. if someone is certain they did wudhu but doubtful whether they broke their wudhu or not then in principle they haven't broken it. [Al-Ashbah wa Nazair].

## 6. Specific Rulings for OCD & Waswasa Patients

### Removing Purity

- If it is visible then removing the apparent stain suffices, not necessarily to remove tiny particles.
- If it is non-visible then washing and rinsing (or wiping) thrice is sufficient.
- Ex: Clothes or carpets.

### Urine & stool

- Avoid urinating in places where there's the possibility of splashes of stains falling onto the clothes.
- Enough to satisfy that no more drops or stool will come out.
- Sprinkle water over the area to remove the misgivings.
- No need to repeat unless certain it has exited or there are stains on the clothes.

### Wudhu & Ghusl

- Washing every limb thrice and complete Masah over the head once is sufficient for the wudhu to complete. Not to rush.
- Washing the entire body thrice is sufficient for the ghusl to be complete. No need to rush.
- Avoid hyperanalyzing every detailed particle. This is not necessary in Islam and is forgiven.

### Salāh

- Intention: Uttering the intention once verbally is sufficient.
- Continue with your salah until you are certain that you have missed a rakat. If in doubt then ignore it. No need to repeat the Salāh.
- If you are reading behind the Imām then just follow the Imām.
- Missing a sunnah or a mustahab does not invalidate the Salāh. Missing a wajib can be compensated by Sajdah Sahw. Missing a Fardh necessitates repeating the Salāh but only when you are certain.

### Divorce

- Intrusive thoughts about divorce does not make the divorce effective.
- Divorce takes place when uttered intentionally in clear terms to divorce your wife (usually during heated arguments).



## 7. Spiritual Recommendations by Shaykh Thanvi (ra) *Ashraf Sawanah*

- Don't pursue the evil thoughts but instead recite ta'awwudh. **YOU CAN NEVER DEFEAT IT.**
- Engage in dhikr, recitation of the Quran and other acts of worship.
- Strengthen your connection with Allāh and know that Allāh does not hold anyone responsible beyond their natural capacity. **HE IS THE MOST FORGIVING AND MOST MERCIFUL.**
- The seeker must not consider himself as rejected by Allāh. Whisperings have no power of control.
- Pre-occupy your mind and focus onto other important things.
- Meditation - Remind yourself that **Allāh loves YOU.** He made you a Muslim and blessed you with Iman and Shaytan seeks to remove that from you.
- Allow yourself time. Don't wait for the results as this leads to hastiness.

## 8. Case Exercise

### *Wudhu & Ghusl*

Today I prayed Fajr Jamat in Masjid and before sunrise, I doubted whether I cleaned my nose while performing obligatory ghusl. My doubt caused me unrest and hence, I repeated the ghusl and the fajr Salāh after sunrise. In case my first prayer was valid, what would happen to the prayer I repeated (just because of the doubt [waswasa]). Am I sinful for repeating the prayer? Will it affect the original prayer I prayed first? Will I get the same reward for the Jamat prayer?

1. Identify the underlying problem in this case.
2. Was it necessary for him to repeat the Salāh based on the fiqh principles?
3. What advice would you give him?

## 8. Case Exercise

### *Divorce*

Whenever me and my husband argue between ourselves, he said I want a divorce or let's get divorce and sometimes he mumbled to himself. I asked him so many time whether he said to me 'I divorce you, or 'you are divorced' then he said no I didn't and sometime he would say I can't remember. I'm getting waswasa always in my mind that may be my husband said something and I didn't hear , please guide me on this

1. Was it necessary for her to ask or not?
2. Would she be divorced?
3. What advice would you give her?

Jazakallah Khayr  
Any Questions?

