98351 - Weeps When He Hears Quran, But Does Bad Things Too

the question

I read on a website about the characteristics of the beloved Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and this made me cry. I also cry sometimes while praying in the masjid, especially if the imam has a passionate voice. Despite this, I fall in sins like masturbation, and talking loudly to my father. I read on your website about the reasons of such sins and how to stop doing them. My question is: Am I considered a hypocrite by committing such sins?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:
We think that your asking whether you are a hypocrite or not is a sign of much goodness in you insha Allah, because when a Muslim fears that he may fall into hypocrisy, this indicates that his heart is (spiritually) alive and that he is keen to protect his faith. Ibraheem al-Taymi said: Whenever I examine my words against my deeds, I fear that I am insincere. Al-Hasan al-Basri said of hypocrisy: No one fears it but a believer, and no one feels safe from it but a hypocrite.

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

The more faith and knowledge a person has, the more he will fear that he may be among this class of people (i.e., hypocrites); hence the leaders and earliest generations of this ummah were afraid that they might be among them. ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say to Hudhayfah (may Allah be pleased with him): I adjure you by Allah, did the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mention me along with the people (i.e., the hypocrites)? He said: No, but I would not praise anyone after you, meaning; I would not praise people (by saying that they are not mentioned among the hypocrites). It does not mean that ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was the only one who was free of hypocrisy.

Tareeq al-Hijratayn (p. 604)

The greatest of the awliya (close friends of Allah) feared this for themselves.

1 – Ibn Abi Mulaykah said: I met thirty of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), all of whom feared being hypocrites, and none of them ever said that he had faith equivalent to that of Jibreel and Mikaa'eel (peace be upon them).

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The most prominent among the Sahabah (Companions) whom Ibn Abi Mulaykah met were: 'Aishah, her sister Asma, Umm Salamah, the four 'Abd-Allahs, Abu Hurayrah, 'Uqbah ibn al-Harith and al-Miswar ibn Makhramah. These are among those from whom he heard hadeeth. He also met more prominent Sahabah than these, such as 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, and he confirmed that they were afraid of hypocrisy in their actions and nothing to the contrary was narrated from any of the Sahabah, so it is as if there was consensus on this matter. That is because the believers' deeds may become contaminated with elements that undermine ikhlas (sincerity towards Allah). The fact that they feared it does not mean that they fell into it, rather it means that they were extremely cautious and pious, may Allah be pleased with them.

Fath al-Bari by Ibn Hajar (1/110,111).

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

Al-Ja'd Abu 'Uthman said: I said to Abu Raj' al-'Attaridi: Did you meet anyone whom I met of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who feared falling into hypocrisy? He said: Yes. Praise be to Allah. I met some of the prominent ones among them, and they used to fear it a great deal. And he had met 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him).

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

Among those of the Sahabah who used to seek refuge with Allah from falling into hypocrisy were: Hudhayfah, Abu'l-Darda and Abu Ayyoob al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with them). Among the

Tabi'een (Successors) there were many who did that. Ibn Sireen said: There is nothing I fear more than this verse (interpretation of the meaning): "And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: 'We believe in Allaah and the Last Day,' while in fact they believe not." [al-Baqarah 2:8] Ayyoob said: Every verse in the Quran which mentions hypocrisy I fear lest it apply to me. Mu'awiyah ibn Qurrah said: 'Umar used to fear it, so how can I feel safe from it? Al-Hasan spoke a great deal concerning this matter, as did the imams of Islam after them.

According to a report narrated by Ibn Hani, al-Imam Ahmad was asked: What do you say about the one who does not fear hypocrisy for himself? He said: Who can feel safe from hypocrisy?

Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab (1/178, 179).

Pay attention to two important matters:

1 – The hypocrisy that was feared by those imams among the Sahabah and those who came after them was hypocrisy in deeds, which leads to hypocrisy in the heart, which leads one to Hell – we seek refuge with Allah – this is the kind of hypocrisy which is mentioned in a number of haadeeths (narrations) which warn the Muslim against acquiring its characteristics, such as the following:

It was narrated that 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Amr (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "There are four characteristics, whoever has them all is a pure hypocrite, and whoever has one of them has one of the characteristics of hypocrisy, until he gives it up: when he speaks he lies, when he makes a covenant he betrays it, when he makes a promise he breaks it, and when he disputes he resorts to obscene speech."

Narrated by al-Bukhari (34) and Muslim (58).

It was also narrated (2632) by al-Tirmidhi (may Allah have mercy on him) who said after it:

What this means according to the scholars is hypocrisy of action. It was the hypocrisy of disbelieving at the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Something similar was narrated from al-Hasan al-Basri when he said: Hypocrisy is of two types: hypocrisy of action and hypocrisy of disbelief.

End quote.

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

This goes back to what we mentioned above: that hypocrisy may be minor or major. Minor hypocrisy is hypocrisy of action, which is what these people feared for themselves. It leads to major hypocrisy which is feared for the one who is overcome by minor hypocrisy to such an extent that it robs him of faith altogether, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“When they turned away (from the path of Allah), Allah turned their hearts away (from the Right Path).”

[al-Saff 61:5]

“And We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away (from guidance), as they refused to believe therein for the first time.”

[al-An’am 6:110]

Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab (1/179).

Al-Imam al-Nawawi commented on this hadeeth … See his Sharh Muslim (2/46-48).

2 – These prominent figures were the most righteous of people in heart, and they were those who most respected the sacred limits and were least likely to transgress them, but because of their great awareness of their Lord and their fear of His wrath, they would regard a minor sin – if they fell into it – as a major sin. Some of them feared showing off, and others feared falling short in their deeds lest their actions contradict their words. Others thought that being distracted by permissible interactions in their homes with their wives and families, even though they focused properly in gatherings of dhikr, was a kind of hypocrisy.

It was narrated that Hanzalah al-Usaydi said: Abu Bakr met me and said: How are you, O Hanzalah? I said: Hanzalah has become a hypocrite. He said: Subhan Allah! What are you saying? I said: When we are with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) he

reminds us of the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we are seeing them with our own eyes, but when we depart from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we attend to our wives and children and businesses, and we forget a great deal. Abu Bakr said: By Allah, we experience something similar. Abu Bakr and I went and entered upon the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and I said: Hanzalah has become a hypocrite, O Messenger of Allah. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Why is that?" I said: O Messenger of Allah, when we are with you, you remind us of the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we are seeing them with our own eyes, but when we depart from you, we attend to our wives and children and businesses, and we forget a great deal. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if you continued as you are when you are with me, and continued to remember (Paradise and Hell), the angels would shake hands with you in your homes and on the streets. But, O Hanzalah, there is a time for this and a time for that," (he said it) three times.

Narrated by Muslim (2750).

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

With regard to the words, "we attend to our wives and children and businesses",

Al-Harawi and others said: What this means is that we become absorbed with them and get busy with them.

"Hanzalah has become a hypocrite" means: he was afraid that he had become a hypocrite, because he felt the fear of Allah when he was sitting with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and that was manifested in the way he focused on remembrance of Allah and thinking of the Hereafter, but when he departed he became distracted by his wife and children and earning a living in this world, and the basic meaning of hypocrisy is showing the opposite of what one conceals of evil, so he was afraid that he was a hypocrite because of that. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told him that this was not hypocrisy, and that they were not expected to be like that all the time. "There is a time for this and a time for that."

Sharh Muslim (17/66, 67)

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

When it became clear to the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) that hypocrisy meant a difference between one's inner thoughts and outward appearance, some of them feared that if they lost the focus and presence of mind they attained when they listened to reminders, after they returned to worldly matters and were distracted by their families and children and wealth, that this was hypocrisy, as was narrated in Saheeh Muslim from Hanzalah al-Asadi … and he quoted the hadeeth –

Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab (1/111).

With regard to your situation, you have to fear more than those pure awliya (close friends of Allah) among the Sahabah, Tabi'een and subsequent generations did, because you are disobeying Allah by doing the secret habit and by mistreating your parents. Your saying that you sometimes raise your voice somewhat to your father will not excuse you from the warning of punishment. You are forbidden to say even "uff" (a mild word of objection) to your parents, so how about if you raise your voice and speak loudly to them? What you must do is beware lest your sins lead you to a bad end.

Al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) gave a chapter heading to the report he narrated from Ibraheem al-Taymi, Ibn Abi Mulaykah and al-Hasan al-Basri – which we have quoted above – saying: Chapter on the believer's fear that his deeds may be cancelled out without him realizing.

And he ended this chapter by saying:

And there is fear for the one who persists in hypocrisy and sin without repenting, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know."

[Al 'Imran 3:135]

End quote.

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

What the words of al-Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) – And there is fear for the one who persists in hypocrisy and sin without repenting, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know,” [Al ‘Imran 3:135]– mean is that if one persists in sin and the various types of hypocrisy without repenting there is the fear that the one who does this may be punished by having his faith taken away altogether, so that he becomes a complete hypocrite and meets a bad end – we seek refuge with Allah from that – as it is said that sin is the way to kufr.

Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab (1/181).

Secondly:

We encourage you to continue softening your heart and weeping when you hear the Quran, and listening to exhortations, and at the same time we encourage you to repent from sinful actions and to refrain from doing the secret habit, and to refrain from mistreating your parents. We encourage you to hasten to apologize to them and to honour them and treat them kindly in word and deed. Beware of continuing to sin without repenting, and remember that the one who truly fears Allah is not the one who weeps and sheds tears, rather he is the one who gives up something for which he fears he may be punished.

What we have quoted to you of warnings about this is sufficient, insha Allah, to make you hasten to repent and turn to Allah.

And Allah knows best.