

210669 - He experiencing persistent thoughts of atheism

the question

I am right now in distress. I am a practising Muslim and also do dawah work. I want to dedicate my life to Islam. The problem is ideas of aethism and what if there is no God is coming to my mind. Naudhubillah! It is there for some time now, it was there before Hajj and also present after hajj. It comes back every now and then. I try to calm my mind by researching in Science, like Big Bang theory and it confuses me even more. 1) I made a lot of dua. But whats the solution? 2) What does Islam say about Big Bang.

Detailed answer

Something that goes without saying and that you must always bear in mind is that the human mind is too weak to comprehend all knowledge or understand the essence of the universe or find out all the realities of life, for it is a mind that is limited in capacity and may be very foolish indeed when left to its own devices or when it functions independently, far away from that which could protect it from guidance.

Its areas of operation should be limited to focusing its efforts on searching, thinking and pondering, and adhering to the type of evidence and proof that the mind of the ordinary, sound human being would be content with – the mind that is not confused by doubts, speculation or specious arguments, and is not unable to reach any level of certainty concerning any matter because of the accumulation of false notions. That is the sound mind that Allah (may He be glorified and exalted) addresses in His holy Book, and that He has made the foundation of accountability. All other minds that are filled with doubts are in need of rehabilitation in order to regain trust in facts and rational principles, and to be able once more to engage with the facts of faith. Insinuating thoughts of atheism – in our view – are more akin to sickness and confusion than to sound scientific thinking that is based on proof and evidence.

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

“Blessed is He in Whose Hand is the dominion, and He is Able to do all things.

Who has created death and life, that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving;

Who has created the seven heavens one above another, you can see no fault in the creations of the Most Beneficent. Then look again: ‘Can you see any rifts?’”

[al-Mulk 67:1-3].

Our experience indicates that early youth is the age at which a person is more vulnerable to intellectual confusion and uncertainty about belief. It seems that this matter may be due to some physiological causes; probably one day scientific studies will be able to research this issue, but until then we may attribute this phenomenon to human nature, as it mostly results from curiosity and attraction to anything that is strange or new. Atheism is a new idea for humanity, or it is an individual inclination and a stage that a person may go through; it appears somewhat glamorous because it is something that makes a person stand out and be different from other people. It is as if the one who embraces it is saying, “I am the only one who broke through the chains to which you are accustomed, and that you grew up believing and affirming.” But regardless of its origin, regardless of how this new idea may sound, and regardless of the uniqueness of his new stance by which he wants to stand out, he is like the man who urinated in Zamzam and was asked about that, and he said: “I wanted to be known, even if it is for something bad”!

It seems that this poor man does not know or does not realize that animals are more rational than he is, because we find that it is as if they believe in cause and effect and they know that any deed must inevitably have a doer. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Have they not travelled through the land, and have they hearts wherewith to understand and ears wherewith to hear? Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the chests that grow blind”

[al-Hajj 22:46].

Usually we give examples from the experience of daily life so as to prove to those who experience persistent thoughts of atheism, by means of something tangible, the extent of the intellectual calamity with which they are faced. A person's daily practices and habits are something sound and natural, and are all based on sound, rational principles. Usually people retain that sound thinking and do not become confused except in cases of insanity – Allah forbid. Hence we may use them to remind the one who is experiencing persistent thoughts of atheism of what is normal, so that he will wake up from his negligence and come back to his senses.

Therefore, let us give you some examples from daily life, from which there is a great lesson to be learned for someone in your situation.

Do you think that if you were sitting in your house and you heard the sound of the doorbell, would you hesitate to respond to this sound? Would you not hurry to see who is at the door? What is it that prompts you to hurry in this way? Don't common sense and logic, on the basis of which we live our lives, tell us that this deed must have a doer, and this effect must have a cause?

Now imagine with us that you doubt these simple facts because you have let yourself become confused by philosophy, and have started to think of other rational possibilities that could explain this noise (the doorbell), and other theories that could explain what has happened in this situation, such as claiming that it is an accident or coincidence, or that there may be a problem with the electricity supply, or it may be a problem that affects different types of bells and alarms, or even the possibility that some people may be messing about by ringing doorbells and running away, and other possibilities that we do not deny could happen, but which we also know are contrary to common sense and what usually happens, and they would never occur to any human being unless he is thinking too much about the matter. The mistake he is making is regarding all these possibilities as equal to the common sense principles and regular occurrences which, were it not for them, the sane and the insane would be regarded as equal in this world. Hence the atheist thinks in this crazy way when it comes to thinking about the

Creator, but in his daily life he lives in a normal manner, far removed from insanity. So he hastens to open the door after hearing the doorbell ring, to find out who wants to come in, and he doesn't hesitate for a moment. He does the same thing when the phone rings or any other new development arises: he will definitely look for the cause or for the one who did it.

Think about how simple an example we gave, that takes only a very brief moment in a man's life, but contains a great lesson. So how about if we give examples in all affairs of worldly life? If we were to list all regular occurrences in this universe, and the astonishing complexity in their details, and the astounding, miraculous phenomenon of creation that is being unfolded in front of humanity day after day, how could we then forget about all that and forget everything that the Prophets brought and told us about, and go against these givens and rational principles, because of new, rational possibilities and theories, in order to oppose these simple and clear principles and guidelines?

Would you not agree with us that this is the main problem and that you and people like you do not need to think about the Big Bang theory and so on as much as you need to be rehabilitated so that you may be guided to the sound way in which the individual with a sound, rational mind engages with the universal realities that surround him.

Shaykh 'Ali at-Tantaawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

All people, believers and disbelievers alike, those who grow up in places of worship and those who grow up in places of evil and promiscuity, when hardship befalls them or some disaster strikes, and they feel distressed as a result and can find no way to cope, do not turn to any of their fellow created beings; rather they turn to the supreme power beyond them, the force that is invisible but which they feel in their souls and in their hearts, and with every nerve in their body they feel its existence and sense its greatness. This happens to many students at the time of exams, and it happens to many sick people when their pain grows worse and the doctor is unable to help. All of them turn back to their Lord and focus on worshipping Him.

Have you asked yourselves what the reason is in these and similar cases? Why do we find that everyone who goes through hardship turns back to Allah? We all remember the time of the last

war, and the one before that, how people used to turn to religion and turn to Allah, and leaders and commanders started going to places of worship and calling upon their troops to pray.

I read in al-Mukhtaar magazine, in a translation from Reader's Digest, an article that was published during the war by a young soldier from the parachute regiment (at a time when parachutes were something new). He told his story and said that he had grown up in a house in which there was no one who mentioned God or prayed, and he studied in a school in which there were no classes in religious education and no teacher who was religious. His upbringing was secular and materialistic; in other words he grew up like animals that know nothing but food, drink and sex. But when he jumped for the first time, and found himself falling from the sky, before his parachute opened, he started saying, "O God, O Lord," calling from his heart. He was surprised and wondered where this faith had come from.

The daughter of Stalin published her memoirs recently, in which she described how she turned to religion. She had grown up in the depths of atheism, and she surprised herself by returning to religion. But this is not strange, because faith exists in all hearts; it is something natural (instinctive) and is part of original human nature, just like the sexual instinct, because man is a "religious animal".

But this instinct may be covered up by desires, hopes and greed, and the pursuit of materialistic things. But once it is shaken by fear, danger or hardship, it emerges. Hence one who does not believe is called a kaafir, which in Arabic means one who conceals.

It is amazing that I have found this idea supported by the words of two people who are far apart in time, space, circumstances and aims, but these two statements are very close in meaning. These are the words of a well-known, pious Muslim worshipper, Raabi'ah al-'Adawiyyah, and the words of a famous French atheist writer, Anatole France.

Anatole France said, in the context of discussing his own atheism and disbelief: Man believes when his urine test shows that he is diabetic (this was in the days when insulin was as yet unknown).

It was said to Raabi'ah: So and so has established one thousand proofs of the existence of Allah. She smiled and said: One proof is sufficient. It was said: What is it? She said: If you were walking on your own in the desert, and you slipped and fell into a well and could not get out of it, what would you do? He said: I would call out: O Allah! She said: That is the proof.

In the depths of every soul there is faith in God. This is a fact which we Muslims know, because Allah has told us that faith is a natural inclination in people. But the foreigners are rediscovering this. Durkheim, the famous French professor of sociology, wrote a book stating that belief in the existence of God is common sense. Man cannot live or die without thinking that there should be a God for this universe, but his reasoning may fall short, thus he may not be guided to the true God and will worship lesser things, thinking that they are God or that they will bring him closer to God.

But at times of hardship and moments of danger, he will turn to God alone and ignore these other objects of worship.

The mushrikeen (polytheists) of Quraysh used to worship Hubal, al-Laat and al-'Uzza, which were idols made of stone. Hubal was an idol made of rubies that was brought from our land by 'Amr ibn Lu'ayy, from al-Hammah. They said to him: It is a great and powerful god. So he loaded it onto a camel and brought it, and on the way it fell and its arm was broken. So they made it an arm of gold. This was a god whose arm could be broken, yet they still worshipped it! They worshipped it at times of safety, but when they travelled by sea, and the waves grew high and they were about to drown, they did not say O Hubal; rather they said: O Allah!

We see this even nowadays, if a ship sinks or a fire breaks out or danger arises or sickness grows severe. You will see atheists turning back to religion. Why is that? It is because faith is instinctual and the best description of the human being is that he is "a religious animal".

Look at these materialistic atheists, when death comes to them. Do they think that Marx or Lenin, when death became certain for them, called upon the "means of production" that they deified, or did they call upon God? You can be sure that they did not die before they called upon God, but that was at a time when such supplication was of no benefit. Pharaoh was an arrogant

tyrant, who said, “I am your lord most high,” but when he was about to drown, he said, “I believe in the One in whom the Children of Israel believe.”

End quote from Ta‘reef ‘Aam bi Deen al-Islam (General Introduction to Islam), p. 45-48

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. [12315](#) and [39684](#)

And Allah knows best.