82740 - She used to do the “secret habit” when fasting, out of ignorance

the question

I am sending you this letter on behalf of my friend who needs someone to advise her. When she was a small child she was abused by one of her father’s friends who used to come and wait for him, and he forced her to be intimate with him when she was five years old, and she thought that this was something new, but he must have been a pervert. This led to her doing that all her life, without realizing what it is. Is that what is called the “secret habit”? This need would come to her when she was fasting and she would do it. When she does it she feels compelled to do it, because that is what she had been accustomed to all her life. Are the fasts of those days not valid? Is the expiation only to fast, since she did not know anything that was called the secret habit?
Please pray for healing for her.
My question is:
1 – How can she expiate for committing this sin whilst fasting?
2 – How can she be healed of this thing?
3 – She recites Qur’aan before she sleeps but feels that she needs to do that.
She is 34 years old and is not married.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

We ask Allaah to forgive and pardon your friend, and to heal her from this disease, and to bless her with a righteous husband and righteous offspring, for He is Able to do that, may He be exalted.

Secondly:

What her father’s friend did is a serious offence and a major crime against this child. He is an evil

pervert who has wronged both father and daughter. We ask Allaah to keep us safe and sound. There is no sin on her for what happened to her, because she was not accountable at that time.

Wise people learn a lesson from such calamities. A man should be careful about the friends to whom he entrusts his secrets and his household. Some of them may appear to be sincere friends, but in fact they are among the devils of mankind. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) advised us of that when he said: “Do not keep company with anyone but a believer and do not let anyone but a pious person eat your food.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (2395), classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

Thirdly:

What is meant by the “secret habit” or masturbation is playing with the private parts and provoking desire to the point of climax, whether that is using the hand or some other means. This is an evil habit and a haraam action. The evidence for its being haraam is explained in the answer to question no. 329, which also includes suggestions for treating this disease.

Fourthly:

If a person does the “secret habit” whilst fasting, and semen is emitted, then his fast is invalidated according to the majority of scholars, but if he was unaware that that invalidates the fast, is his fast invalidated and does he have to make it up?

There is a difference of opinion among the fuqaha’ on this point. A group of scholars, including Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) are of the view that it does not invalidate his fast. This view was also favoured by Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him). You will find this explained in more detail in the answer to question no. 50017.

This sister should pray a great deal for forgiveness and do a lot of acts of worship, and she should avoid haraam things and adhere to righteousness, so that Allaah may forgive her, as Allaah has promised (interpretation of the meaning):

“And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates

none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them (till his death)”

[Ta-Ha 20:82]

Fifthly:

Marriage – as is the case with all of a person’s affairs – is subject to the decree of Allaah, and it is not known what is better, delaying it or hastening it. A person has to accept Allaah’s decree and submit to it, and follow the means that lead to provision and relief from distress, which include making du’aa’ and praying and obeying Allaah. See also question no. 21234.

May Allaah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allaah knows best.