397034 - Swearing to Pray if She breaks an Oath or She is Not a Muslim

the question

I have sworn an oath about this sin I have been addicted to and I am trying desperately to rid myself of it. In my oath, I stated that if I do this sin, for a week I will have to perform ghusl every day and pray 8 rakah nawafil as expiation. And If I repeat the sin, another week will be added, and so on. I have been stuck in this loop and keep doing the sin and now I owe over 6 months of prayers, this has become extremely burdensome for me to carry out and I am now struggling mentally and externally to cope with my addiction. I have stated in my oath that if I do this sin, and do not do the expiation of ghusl and 8 rakah for even a day, I will have committed kufr, I am wasting huge amounts of water and time performing this every day, and my family is fed up. Is there any way for me to break free from this loop and expiate the oath?

is this oath valid?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

If someone swears that if they commit a sin, they will perform ghusl (a full-body ritual wash) every day and pray eight optional Rak`ahs for a week, and if they repeat the sin, they will add another week, then if they fall into sin and do not perform the ghusl and do not pray, they have broken their oath, and they must perform the expiation for breaking an oath. This will release them from their oath.

The expiation for breaking an oath is: freeing a slave, or feeding ten needy people, or clothing them. If one cannot do these, then fasting for three days is required, as Allah the Exalted says (translation of the meaning):

{Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you intended of oaths. So its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your [own] families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] - then a fast of three days [is required]. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. But guard your oaths.} This verse is from Surat Al-Ma'idah/89.

It is sufficient to give each needy person a meal, or one and a half kilograms of rice.

Secondly:

If someone swears that if they commit a sin and do not perform the ghusl and pray eight Rak`ahs, even for just one day, they will become a disbeliever, they have sinned by making this prohibited oath, but they do not become a disbeliever by doing so; because they detest disbelief and want to prevent themselves from something, so they make it severe by mentioning something they hate and are repelled by, which is disbelief.

However, if they break the oath: they must perform the expiation for breaking an oath.

At-Tirmidhi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his Sunan (4/115): "The scholars have differed concerning this matter when a man swears by a religion other than Islam, saying: 'He is a Jew or a Christian if he does such and such,' and then he does that thing. Some of them said: 'He has done something grave and there is no expiation upon him,' and this is the view of the people of Madinah, and it is the view of Malik ibn Anas. Abu `Ubaid also held this view.

Some of the scholars among the Companions (may Allah be pleased with him) and the Successors and others said: 'He must perform expiation,' and this is the view of Sufyan, Ahmad, and Ishaq." End quote.

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

"If he says: 'He is a Jew or a Christian if he does such and such,' or 'He is a disbeliever if he does such and such,' then the Imams are agreed that if the condition is met, he does not become a

disbeliever, but he must perform the expiation for breaking an oath according to Abu Hanifah and Ahmad in the well-known view from him. According to Malik and Ash-Shafi`i, there is nothing upon him.

Unlike if he says: 'If you give me the dirhams, I will disbelieve,' then he does become a disbeliever by that; his disbelief is enacted immediately [i.e., he disbelieves right away just by saying these words]; because he intended the occurrence of disbelief when the condition is met." End quote from "Majmu` al-Fatawa" (33/199).

In conclusion:

You are required to perform two expiations, one for swearing by Allah and another for swearing on disbelief. With this, you will be released from this predicament you have put yourself in. Then you should strive to abandon the sin and treat the addiction to it, and we ask Allah to accept from you and to help you.

And Allah knows best.