515412 - Is it possible for a Muslim to disbelieve at the time of his death?

the question

Is it possible for disbelief to occur at the time of death as a result of confusion caused by Iblis?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If someone is Muslim then decides to do an act of disbelief when he is still accountable – that is, before his soul begins to depart – he becomes a disbeliever.

Iblis may come to a person when he is dying, but is still conscious and accountable, and whisper things to him to confuse him and misguide him.

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to seek refuge with Allah from that.

It was narrated from Abul-Yasar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of *Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say in his supplication: "Allahumma inni a`udhu bika min al-hadam, wa a`udhu bika min at-taraddi, wa a`udhu bika min al-gharaqi wal-haraqi wal-haram, wa a`udhu bika an yatakhabbatani ash-shaytanu `inda al-mawt, wa a`udhu bika an amuta fi sabilika mudbiran, wa a`udhu bika an amutu ladighan (O Allah, I seek refuge with You from dying under a collapsed building, I seek refuge with You from dying from a long fall, and I seek refuge with You from drowning, burning and decrepitude. I seek refuge with You lest the Shaytan confuse and misguide me at the time of my death, I seek refuge with You lest I die fleeing from a fight in Your cause, and I seek refuge with You lest I die from the sting of a venomous creature)."*

Narrated by Ahmad, 3/427; Abu Dawud, 1552 – he did not comment on its soundness; an-Nasa'i, 5531. Al-Hakim said in *Al-Mustadrak*, 1/713: Its isnad is authentic (sahih), although [al-Bukhari and

Muslim] did not narrate it. Al-Albani classed it as authentic (sahih) in *Sahih Abi Dawud*.

It says in *`Awn al-Ma`bud*, 4/287: “lest the Shaytan confuse and misguide me at the time of my death” means: lest Iblis or one of his helpers corrupt me. What is meant is corrupting reason and faith. And the hadith specifically mentions at the time of death because what matters is what happens at the end of one’s life.

Al-Qadi said: In other words: lest the Shaytan whisper to me, cause me to slip and confuse me.

Al-Khattabi said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) sought refuge with Allah from the Shaytan causing confusion at the time of death; this refers to the Shaytan taking control of a person at the time when he is departing this world, then misguiding him and preventing him from repenting; and seeking to prevent him from rectifying his condition and seeking to compensate for the wrongs he did to others; or making him him despair of the mercy of Allah, may He be Exalted; or making him hate death and feel sad for departing this worldly life, so he is not content with what Allah has decreed of death and moving to the hereafter, and thus he will have a bad end and will meet Allah when He is angry with him.

It was narrated that the Shaytan does not try harder to mislead the son of Adam than when he is dying. He says to his helpers: Go and get him, for if you miss him today, you will never catch him after today.

We seek refuge with Allah from his evil, and we ask Him to bless us at that moment and make the best of our days the day when we meet Him. End quote.

Ibn al-Jawzi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Iblis may try hard to come to the sick person or dying person and try to harm him in his faith and worldly affairs … he may gain control of him at that moment, and misguide him in his beliefs, and he may prevent him from repenting … or he may make him object to what is decreed (that is, death). So the believer should realise that that moment will inevitably be a battle (with Iblis), and when the fight grows intense, he must remain steadfast and seek Allah’s help against the enemy.

End quote from *Ath-Thabat `inda al-Mamat*, 57.

For more information on Shaytan's causing confusion at the time of death, and whether he tries to confuse people by calling them to other religions, or he comes in the form of one's parents, see the answer to question no. 224448.

And Allah knows best.