209560 - Ruling on water spray from a fountain in which a dog was sitting

the question

I was walking in the city with my family, and there was a dog sitting in the water basin of a fountain for at least three minutes. The spray of the fountain went up high, as much as three storeys, as it was a very big fountain. I know that the water in the fountain is recirculated, therefore the water in the basin in which the dog was sitting went up, and the wind blew it onto us even though we were far away from it. Now I am worried in case the impurity of the dog got all over our apartment, the floor, the furniture, the electrical appliances, the accessories and everything. Now I feel that I will never be clean and neither will my belongings, and my prayer and fasting will never be valid. I hope that you will reply as soon as possible, because this is causing me a lot of anguish. How can I clean everything? I do not believe that I can clean every item seven times, one of which must be with dust.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The fact that a dog sat in a pond or the basin of a fountain for three minutes, or less or more, does not affect the purity of the water, because the water in ponds and fountains is usually a large amount.

The evidence for that includes the report narrated by Imam Ahmad (11391), Abu Dawud (67), at-Tirmidhi (66) and an-Nasa'i (324) from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri, who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say, when he was asked: They have brought water for you to drink from the well of Buda`ah, and it is a well into which the flesh of dogs, menstrual rags and human faeces are thrown. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Water is pure and nothing can make it impure."

According to a version narrated by an-Nasa'i (325): I passed by the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) when he was doing wudu at the well of Buda`ah. I said: Are you doing wudu at this well when off-putting and foul-smelling things are thrown into it? He said: "Nothing makes water impure."

Al-Mubarakfuri (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The well of Buda`ah contained a large amount of water, many times more than two qullahs, so it was not changed by these things falling into it, because nothing makes a large amount of water impure so long as it does not change.(*Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi Sharh Sahih at-Tirmidhi)*.

Ibn `Abd al-Barr (may Allah have mercy on him) said: This is consensus, with no difference of opinion. If water is changed because of something that overwhelms it, whether it is in impure substance or a pure substance, then it is no longer a means of purification. Sahl ibn Sa`d as-Sa`idi said: I gave the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) water to drink from the well of Buda`ah with my own hands.(*Al-Istidhkar*, 1/136).

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: You should understand that the hadith about the well of Buda`ah is general in meaning with an exception; the exception is that which is changed by an impure substance, which becomes impure according to scholarly consensus.(*Al-Majmu`*, 1/129).

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Ibn al-Mundhir said: The scholars are unanimously agreed that if some impure substance falls into a large amount of water, such as a sea inlet and the like, but does not change its colour, taste or smell, then the water remains as it is and may be used for purification.(*Al-Mughni*, 1/39).

It says in *Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da'imah* (5/84): The basic principle is that water is pure, but if its colour, taste or smell is changed by an impure substance, then it becomes impure, whether the amount is small or great. But if the impurity does not change it, then it remains pure and is still a means of purification. End quote.

Based on the above, the basic principle regarding the water spray from the fountain and the like is that it is still pure, and is in fact a means of purification, and it is valid to use it to remove ritual

impurity (by doing wudu and ghusl) and to remove impure substances, so long as we are not certain that some impure substance has changed any of its characteristics. Such a scenario cannot be verified in the situation you mentioned, namely that some droplets of fountain water landed on you whilst you were walking.

Hence the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and his companions did wudu at the well of Buda`ah despite what was thrown into it of impure things. This indicates that a large amount of water is not affected by a small amount of impurities.

Ash-Shawkani (may Allah have mercy on him) said in *Al-Madhhab* (1/221): If someone is certain that water is pure and is not sure whether it is impure, he may use it to do wudu, because the basic principle is that it remains pure… If he is not sure whether it is pure or impure, he may use it to do wudu, because the basic principle is that it is assumed to be pure. End quote.

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:  If they are not sure whether any impurity got onto their clothing, then in principle the clothes are still pure and they do not have to wash them, and they may pray in them and there is nothing wrong with that. And Allah knows best.(*Majmu` Fatawa Ibn `Uthaymin*, 11/108).

See also the answer to question no. 194190.

What you must do is be aware of letting intrusive thoughts (waswas) affect your acts of worship or even any of your regular daily activities, because once intrusive thoughts become entrenched in a person’s mind, they will cause trouble in all his affairs.

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. 10160 and 62839.

And Allah knows best.