

Allaah is the Creator of everything and anything other than Him is created

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Shaykh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)¹: All praise be to Allaah Alone, and peace and blessings be upon the Last Prophet, and upon his family and Companions.

A Muslim brother wrote a letter to me mentioning that one of his colleagues has some doubts; he acknowledges that Allaah (Glorified be He) is the Creator of the heavens, earth, `Arsh (Allaah's Throne), Kursee (Allaah's Chair) and everything. However, he wonders who created Allaah. He answered him that the first part of his speech is right and there is no comment on it. As for the second part about who created Allaah, such a question should not be asked by a Muslim. A Muslim should be satisfied with the knowledge that the Sahaabah (Companions of the Prophet) found to be sufficient, for they never asked such a question although they were the most knowledgeable of all people. He also added that Allaah (Glorified be He) says about Himself: **[There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.]² And: [He is the First** (nothing is before Him) **and the Last** (nothing is after Him), **the Most High** (nothing is above Him) **and the Most Near** (nothing is nearer than Him). **And He is the All-Knower of everything.]³** He urged me to write about this doubtful matter and my answer was as follows:

You should know - may Allaah grant me, you and all believers success in understanding His Religion and holding fast to it - that devils among mankind and Jinn are and will continue to throw Muslims into doubt with regard to the truth to bring Muslims out of light into darkness and make Kaafirs (disbelievers) cling tighter to their false beliefs. It is already foreknown and predestined by Allaah that this world is for trials and conflict between truth and falsehood, so the seeker of guidance will be manifest, the trustful will be distinct from the liar, and the believer from the Kaafir. Allaah (Glorified be He) says: **[Alif-Laam-Meem.** [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'aan, and none but Allaah (Alone) knows their meanings.] **Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested. And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allaah will certainly make (it) known** (the truth of) **those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known** (the falsehood of) **those who are liars,** (although Allaah knows all that before

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

² [Soorah al-Shoora 42:11]

³ [Soorah al-Hadeed 57:3]

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putting them to test).⁴ Allaah (Glorified be He) also says: [**And surely, We shall try you till We test those who strive hard** (for the Cause of Allaah) **and as-Saabiroon** (the patient), **and We shall test your facts** (i.e. the one who is a liar, and the one who is truthful)].⁵ And [**And certainly, the Shayaateen** (devils) **do inspire their friends** (from mankind) **to dispute with you, and if you obey them** [by making Al-Maitah (a dead animal) legal by eating it], **then you would indeed be Mushrikoon** (polytheists); **[because they** (devils and their friends) **made lawful to you to eat that which Allaah has made unlawful to eat and you obeyed them by considering it lawful to eat, and by doing so you worshipped them; and to worship others besides Allaah is polytheism].**]⁶ And: [**And so We have appointed for every Prophet enemies - Shayaateen** (devils) **among mankind and jinn, inspiring one another with adorned speech as a delusion** (or by way of deception). **If your Lord had so willed, they would not have done it; so leave them alone with their fabrications.**]⁷ [(And this is in order) **that the hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter may incline to such** (deceit), **and that they may remain pleased with it, and that they may commit what they are committing** (all kinds of sins and evil deeds).]⁸ Allaah (Glorified be He) makes it clear in the first, second and third Ayahs (Qur'aanic verses) that He tests those who claim to be believers to make evident the truth of their faith or its falsity.

Allaah (Glorified be He) informs that this is what was done with past nations to make evident those who are true and those who are liars. This test of faith includes trials of wealth, poverty, sickness, health, confronting enemies and different kinds of doubts being cast by the devils among mankind and Jinn so that the person who is true in faith will be distinct from the liar. Thus, things gain real existence after they have been existing in the Foreknowledge of Allaah (Exalted be He), because Allaah has foreknowledge of everything. Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [**...that you may know that Allaah has power over all things, and that Allaah surrounds all things in (His) Knowledge.**]⁹ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: '**Allaah decreed the destinies of creatures fifty thousand years before creating the heavens and the earth.**' He (peace be upon him) said, '**And His Throne was upon water.**' (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) But Allaah will not punish people according to His Foreknowledge of what they will do. Rather, He will punish and reward them according to what He knows they will do after they actually do it and it has real existence.

In the fourth, fifth and sixth Ayahs, Allaah (Glorified be He) mentions that devils sow doubts into the hearts of their followers and inspire them with adorned speech to dispute with the followers of the truth and overwhelm them with confusion concerning Islaam. As a result, the hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter may incline to such deceit and they may

⁴ [Soorah al-Ankaboot 29:1-3]

⁵ [Soorah Muhammad 47:31]

⁶ [Soorah al-An'aam 6:121]

⁷ (Tafseer Qurtubee)

⁸ [Soorah al-An'aam 6:113]

⁹ [Soorah al-Talaq 65:12]

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become pleased with it. They may spread and mix truth with falsehood to throw people into doubts and divert them from guidance. Allaah is not unaware of what they do. Allaah, out of His Grace, has assigned for those devils and their supporters those who would uncover their falsehood and dispel their doubts by means of conclusive arguments and decisive proofs. They bring forth evidence, leaving no room for excuses. Allaah (Glorified be He) has sent down His Book as an exposition of everything. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: **[And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'aan) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allaah as Muslims).]**¹⁰ He (Glorified be He) also says: **[And no example or similitude do they bring (to oppose or to find fault in you or in this Qur'aan), but We reveal to you the truth (against that similitude or example), and the better explanation thereof.]**¹¹ Some of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) said that this Ayah is general for every argument made by the people of falsehood until the Day of Judgment.

It was authentically reported in many Saheeh (authentic) Hadeeths that some of the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): **'We feel in ourselves thoughts that one of us finds too terrible to speak of.'** He (peace be upon him) said, **'Have you truly felt this?' They said, 'Yes.'** He (peace be upon him) said, **'That is (a sign of) pure 'Eemaan (faith).'** In interpretation, some scholars said that Satan may throw a person into doubts and Waswasah (insinuating thoughts from Satan) which they find too difficult to speak about due to their extreme badness and hideousness, to the extent that to fall from the sky is easier for them than to speak about such doubts and insinuations. The servant's denunciation of these insinuations and regarding them as heinous and fighting them is a sign of pure 'Eemaan. True 'Eemaan in Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and in the perfection of His Names and Attributes and that there is no partner or peer to Him and that He is the Supreme Creator, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise and the All-Aware (of all things) entails disapproving of, fighting and disbelieving in the falsehood of these doubts and insinuations. Undoubtedly, what the colleague in question told you is considered one of such insinuations. You have done well. Your answer to him is right, may Allaah grant you more knowledge and success.

I will mention here, in'sha'allaaah (if Allaah wills), some of the Hadeeths reported concerning this issue besides some of scholars' arguments so that the falsity of this doubt may be clear to you and your colleague. You will learn what a believer should say whenever they encounter such a doubt. Then I will conclude my answer with what Allaah makes easy for me in this honourable situation. Allaah is the One Who guides and leads us to the right way.

Al-Imaam Al-Bukhaaree (may Allaah be merciful to him) said in Al-Jami` Al-Saheeh, p. 336, vol. VI, Fath Al-Baree, Al-Matba`ah Al-Salafiyah Printing House, chapter on the Character of Satan

¹⁰ [Soorah an-Nahl 16:89]

¹¹ [Soorah al-Furqaan 25:33]

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and His Soldiers: Yahya ibn Bakir narrated from Al-Layth from `Aqil from Ibn Shihab from `Urwah ibn Al-Zubayr on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **'Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created such and such? Who created such and such?' until he says, 'Who created your Lord?' When he reaches this far** (i.e. when such a question is provoked within him), **let him seek refuge with Allaah and forbear from such thoughts.'** Al-Bukhaaree reported the same Hadeeth in the chapter on Al-I'tisam, p.264, vol. XIII of Fath Al-Baree on the authority of Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **People will keep on asking, until it is said, 'Allaah is the Creator of everything, who, then, has created Allaah?'** Muslim reported in his Saheeh the first wording of Aboo Hurayrah's narration, in p. 154, part II, vol. I, Commentary on Saheeh Muslim by Al-Nawawee (may Allaah be merciful to him). Muslim also reported another wording of the Hadeeth on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **People will keep on asking, until it is said, 'Allaah has created the creation, who, then, has created Allaah?'** **Whoever experiences anything like this, let him say, 'I believe in Allaah and His Messengers.'** Muslim reported this Hadeeth with another wording on the authority of Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said that Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) said: **Verily your Ummah** (nation based on one creed) **would constantly question this and that** (matter) **until they would say, 'Well, it is Allaah Who has created the creation, but who has created Allaah?'** Muslim (may Allaah be merciful to him) related also on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that he said: **Some people from among the Sahaabah of the Prophet** (peace be upon him) **came to him and asked, 'We feel in ourselves thoughts that one of us finds too terrible to speak of.'** He (peace be upon him) **said, 'Have you truly felt this?' They said, 'Yes.'** He (peace be upon him) **said, 'That is (a sign of) pure 'Eemaan.'** Then Muslim reported on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) that he said: **The Prophet** (peace be upon him) **was asked about Waswasah** (insinuating thoughts from Satan) **and he** (peace be upon him) **replied, 'That is (a sign of) pure 'Eemaan.'**

Al-Nawawee (may Allaah be merciful to him) said in his Commentary on Saheeh Muslim, in explanation of these Hadeeths: As for the meaning and significance of the Hadeeths, the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): **That is (a sign of) pure 'Eemaan** means that feeling that it is too grave to express such insinuations is manifest 'Eemaan. Feeling their gravity and having fear of speaking about them, let alone believing in them, comes from a person who has reached perfect 'Eemaan and is free of doubts and suspicions. Bearing in mind that the second narration, although it does not explicitly mentions the part about regarding this too grave to speak about, implies its meaning, for it is abridged from the first narration. Therefore, Muslim (may Allaah be merciful to him) gave precedence to the first narration. It was said that it means that Satan insinuates to whoever he despairs of tempting, so he troubles them with insinuations for failing to tempt them.

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As for the Kaafirs, Satan attacks them from everywhere. He does not limit himself to insinuating thoughts to the Kaafirs, but he manipulates them as he pleases. Based on this meaning, the Hadeeth means that the cause of suffering Waswasah is having pure 'Eemaan, or that Waswasah is the mark of pure 'Eemaan. This opinion was favoured by Al-Qadi `Iyaad.

The words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): **Whoever experiences anything like this, let him say, 'I believe in Allaah'** and in the second narration **...let him seek refuge with Allaah and forbear from such thoughts** mean that one should stop such false thoughts and resort to Allaah to help him get rid of them. Imaam Al-Maziry (may Allaah be merciful to him) said that the apparent meaning of the Hadeeth is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered them to push away such evil thoughts by rejecting and avoiding them without seeking evidence or refutation. He added that thoughts are of two types (settled and unsettled). The unsettled thoughts, which are not brought forth by doubt that suddenly arises, are the ones that can be warded off by avoiding them. This is what is meant by the Hadeeth, and such thoughts are called Waswasah. Accordingly, baseless incidental thoughts are to be dispelled without considering proofs since these thoughts are baseless. As for settled thoughts, which are brought forth by doubts, they can only be dispelled by evidence and examining refutation. And Allaah knows best.

As for the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): **...let him seek refuge with Allaah and forbear from such thoughts**, they mean that whenever one experiences such Waswasah, they should resort to Allaah (Exalted be He) and seek His Help to ward off such evil and stop such thoughts. One should know that such thoughts are provoked by Satan, who seeks to spread corruption and temptation. A Muslim should resist these satanic insinuations and should put an end to them by occupying oneself with other useful thoughts. And Allaah knows best. (Al-Nawawee, may Allaah be merciful to him, p. 156)

Commenting on the Hadeeth narrated on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah that is mentioned at the beginning of the answer, Al-Hafiz said in Fath Al-Baree: Regarding the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): **'Who created your Lord?' When he reaches this far** (i.e., when such a question is provoked within him), **let him seek refuge with Allaah and forbear from such thoughts**. They mean that one should not indulge in such thoughts, but rather seek the Help of Allaah to dispel such thoughts. One should realise that Satan wants to spoil their religion and mind with these insinuations. A Muslim should strive hard to dispel such thoughts by occupying themselves with other useful things. Al-Khattaby said: "The significance of this Hadeeth is that when Satan whispers such thoughts to a person who then seeks refuge with Allaah and stops indulging with him, such thoughts will be dispelled. Otherwise, if a human being makes such an insinuation, it could be refuted with proofs. The difference between them is that the insinuations of a human being take the form of a question and answer and are restricted in scope, so one can put an end to them by following the right way of argumentation. On the other hand, insinuations of Satan have no

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end; rather, whenever an insinuation is refuted with evidence, Satan casts another insinuation until man is thrown into confusion. We seek refuge with Allaah from this."

Al-Khattaby said: "His (Satan) saying: 'Who has created your Lord?' is nonsensical; its end contradicts its beginning, for it is impossible for the Creator to be created. Moreover, if the direction the question is pointing towards was plausible, it would necessitate sequence, which is impossible. Reason has proven that creatures are in need of a creator; so if He is in need of a creator, He will be among the creatures."

Differentiation between Satan's insinuations and human's talk is subject to consideration, for it was authentically reported by Muslim on the authority of Hisham ibn `Urwah from his father concerning the following Hadeeth: **'People will keep on asking, until it is said, 'Allaah has created the creation, who, then, has created Allaah?'** Whoever experiences anything like this, let him say, 'I believe in Allaah.' Thus, refraining from discussing this subject is equally required, whether the one who provokes questions about it is a human or otherwise.

In another narration by Muslim on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah, he said: "Two asked me about it." Since questioning about this is invalid, it does not deserve an answer. Or abstinence from discussing this is analogous to the command of refraining from indulgence in the subject of the Attributes and Essence of Allaah. Al-Maziry said: "Thoughts are of two types (settled and unsettled). The unsettled thoughts, which are not brought forth by doubt, are the ones that can be warded off by avoiding them. The Hadeeth applies to such thoughts; these and the like are called Waswasah. As for settled thoughts that arise from doubt, they can only be dispelled by reasoning and evidence."

Al-Tayyiby said: "He (peace be upon him) ordered (in this case) to seek refuge with Allaah and to occupy oneself with something else, rather than contemplate and argue, for knowing that Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is not in need of a creator is an inevitable matter that is not open to controversy. Nourishing this thought only increases one's bewilderment. The only way out is to resort to Allaah (Exalted be He) and seek His Protection. The Hadeeth also indicates disapproval of asking many questions about things that are not of one's concern or one is no need to know. It also includes one of the signs of his Prophethood - that is, foretelling what is going to happen and it did."

The Shaykh of Islaam, Ibn Taymeeyah (may Allaah be merciful to him), said in his book, Muwafaqat Saheeh Al-Manqul Li-Saryh Al-Ma`qul: "Sequence means sequence of effects i.e., every action has a doer (subject) who in turn has a doer, and so on. This is Baatil (null and void) according to sound reason and agreement of rational people. This is the sequence against which the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered to seek refuge with Allaah and to give it up. The person here should say, 'I believe in Allaah' as mentioned in the Two Saheeh (authentic) Books of Hadeeth (i.e. Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) on the authority of AbooHurayrah who

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narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created such and such? Who created such and such?' until he says, 'Who created your Lord?' When he reaches this far** (i.e., when such a question is provoked within him), **let him seek refuge with Allaah and refrain from such thoughts.** In another narration: **People will keep on asking, until it is said, 'Allaah has created the creation, who, then, has created Allaah?'** He (Aboo Hurayrah) said: "While I was in the Masjid (mosque), some Bedouin people came to me and said, 'O Aboo Hurayrah, this is Allaah, Who created the creation, but who, then, created Allaah?' So he grabbed some pebbles in his hand and flung them at them, then he said, 'Get up! Get up! My close friend (the Prophet) told the truth.'" In Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, it was also narrated on the authority of Anas ibn Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace be upon him) said: **Allaah said, ['Verily your Ummah would constantly question this and that (matter) until they would say, 'Well, it is Allaah Who has created the creation, but who has created Allaah?']** End of Ibn Taymeeyah's words.

I hope it is now clear to you, dear questioner, and to your colleague who experienced this doubt, through the Ayahs, Hadeeths and scholarly opinions we have mentioned how such doubts are completely false and baseless. Allaah (Glorified be He) has no partner, peer, or equal. He is perfect in His Essence, Attributes and Actions. He is the Creator of everything, and anything other than Him is created.

Allaah tells us in His Truth-Clarifying Book and also through His Honest Messenger (peace be upon him) what should we believe regarding Him, the way to know Him and the evidence of His Existence through His Names, Attributes and visible Signs in the heaven, earth, mountains, seas, rivers and all His other creatures, including man's own self that testifies to Allaah's Power, Grandeur, Perfect Knowledge and Wisdom. Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: **[Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.]**¹² And: **[And on the earth are signs for those who have Faith with certainty. And also in your own selves. Will you not then see?]**¹³

As for the essence of His Self and the nature of His Attributes, they are matters of the Ghayb (the Unseen) which He did not inform us of, and so one should believe in and show compliance without inquiring into them, following the example of the Salaf, Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) and their successors in righteousness. They did not indulge in or ask about this; rather, they believed in Allaah (Glorified be He) and what He told about Himself in His Book and what His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) conveyed without any addition. They believed that there is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer. Whoever experiences such Waswasah should feel their gravity and renounce them strongly

¹² [Soorah al-Imraan 3:190]

¹³ [Soorah ad-Dhariyaat 51:20-21]

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from the bottom of the heart, saying: "I believe in Allaah and His Messengers" and seek refuge with Allaah from the incitements of Satan. They should dispel and discard them as the Messenger (peace be upon him) ordered us in the Hadeeths mentioned above. He (peace be upon him) stressed that regarding such thoughts as terrible and renouncing them is pure 'Eemaan. One should not carry on with those who inquire into this subject, for this leads to great evil and endless doubts. Therefore, the best cure to such insinuations in order to be safe from their evil is to obey and rely on the commandments of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and to give up indulging in them. This is in accordance with the Words of Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He): **[And if an evil whisper from Shaytaan (Satan) tries to turn you away (O Muhammad ﷺ) (from doing good), then seek refuge in Allaah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.]**¹⁴

Seeking refuge with Allaah (Glorified be He), resorting to Him and avoiding the subjects introduced by sceptics and empty talkers as philosophers and whoever followed their way who delve into the subject of Allaah's Names and Attributes and whatever Allaah kept hidden of His Knowledge, without having a plea or evidence is the way of the people of righteousness and 'Eemaan. It is the way of safety and salvation from the plots of devils among human beings and Jinn. May Allaah save you, all Muslims and myself from their tricks. Therefore, when some people asked Aboo Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) about such insinuations, he cast pebbles at them and did not answer them. He only said, "My close friend (the Prophet) told the truth."

A Muslim, in this regard, should recite the Ever-Glorious Qur'aan frequently and contemplate it, for it clarifies Allaah's Attributes and Greatness and gives evidence to His Existence, which instils faith, love and glorification in the hearts. It creates firm belief that Allaah (Glorified be He) is the Lord and Creator of everything. There is no god or lord except Him.

A Muslim should also ask Allaah to grant them more useful knowledge, insight, steadfastness in the truth and safety from falling into misguidance after guidance. He (Glorified be He) directs and urges His Servants to ask for His Favours, and promises them to answer their requests. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: **[And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islaamic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!"]**¹⁵ There are so many Ayahs carrying this meaning.

I ask Allaah to guide us, your colleague and all other Muslims to understand religion and to keep us from deluding trials, tricks and incitements of the devils among mankind and Jinn. Indeed, He is the Patron, Capable of all things. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allaah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you). May Peace and blessings of Allaah be upon His Servant and our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions.

¹⁴ [Soorah Fussilat 41:36]

¹⁵ [Soorah Ghafir 40:60]