113220 - Doing extra acts of worship on occasions when sin is widespread

the question

What is the ruling on doing acts of worship at times when people are committing a lot of sin (such as the Gregorian New Year), acting upon the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “Worship at times of turmoil is like migrating to me (hjrah)”?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Muslim who adheres to his religion is the one who remembers Allah, many He be glorified and exalted, in secret and openly, at good times and bad. His Lord is never absent from his thoughts or from his heart, and he is not distracted by anything from worshipping Him, and he is not diverted by anything from loving Him. So you see him in all circumstances keen to worship Allah, keen to fill his life with obedience to his Lord. If he mixes with other worshippers, he competes with them to earn the pleasure of Allah, and when he sees those who are heedless, he realizes the blessing that Allah has bestowed upon him by guiding him. These are the witnesses and the strangers, those who are holding on to a coal of fire; many hadeeths speak of the virtue of their actions and their adherence to the Sunnah at times of turmoil, tests and alienation.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Islam began as something strange and will revert to being something strange, so glad tidings to the strangers.”

Narrated by Muslim, no. 145

The one who adheres to the Sunnah and obedience and worship of Allah during times of turmoil and negligence and during times of righteousness and piety is doing well. He strives and worships whatever the situation.

This is the one who is praised in the hadeeths.

As for what some people understand, that one should watch out for days when sin and evil are widespread so that one may hasten to single out that day for fasting or praying qiyaam, when that is not part of his regular practice, this is not the correct understanding of the hadeeth, and is not what was meant by the Wise Lawgiver. Rather what is meant is to encourage people to adhere to the Sunnah constantly and to follow completely the commands of Allah, so that the Muslim will remain a beacon on earth during the darkest times and will meet Allah never having faltered in his commitment to Him.

This is how the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was. At every moment of every day he was devoted and sincere towards Allah, may He be exalted, and he never missed any opportunity to worship Him. Usaamah ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him) asked him: O Messenger of Allah, I have never seen you fast as much in any month as you fasted in Sha'baan. He said: "That is a month that the people neglect between Rajab and Ramadan, but it is the month in which deeds are taken up to the Lord of the Worlds, and I would like my deeds to be taken up when I am fasting." Narrated by al-Nasaa'i in al-Sunan (no. 2357) and classed as hasan by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah, no. 1898.

This is also the meaning of the hadeeth which was narrated by Ma'qil ibn Yasaar (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Worship at times of turmoil is like migrating to me (hjrah)." Narrated by Muslim (2548).

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant by turmoil here is fitnah and when there is a great deal of confusion among people. The reason why worship at such times is of such great virtue is that people become careless about it and are distracted from it, and no one is devoted to it except a few. End quote.

Sharh Muslim 18/88

We do not think that the sister who asked this question or any of the Muslims should single out the

night of the Gregorian New Year for worship by way of responding to the disbelievers who fill those nights with sin, unless it is already a Muslim's regular habit to pray qiyaam or fast at other times too, in which case there is nothing wrong with doing acts of worship on those nights, and Allah will reward him with good for his actions and his intention.

The warning against singling out the nights of the disbelievers' festivals for worship has been discussed in the answer to question no. 113064.

And Allah knows best.