52923 - Is the person who prays Friday prayer only not a kaafir?

the question

Is it correct that who prays Friday prayer only is not considered kaafir? I read that sheikh Ben Uthaimeen, may Allah have mercy on him, said: whoever prays Friday prayer is not a kaafir; because he never neglects it, because the prophet, peace be upon him, said (the prayer) not (prayer). Is it true that ibn Uthaimeen and ibn Taymiyah said this?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is a difference of opinion among those who say that the one who does not pray is a kaafir, with regard to the exact definition of the omission of prayer which makes him a kaafir. Most of them are of the view that he becomes a kaafir if he omits one obligatory prayer or two obligatory prayers.

Some of them are of the view that the one who does not pray does not become a kaafir unless he gives up prayer altogether.

The former opinion was narrated by Ishaaq ibn Raahawayh (may Allah have mercy on him) from the Sahaabah and Taabi'een. Imam Muhammad ibn Nasr al-Maroozi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: I heard Ishaaq say: it is narrated in a saheeh report from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that the one who does not pray is a kaafir, and this was the opinion of the scholars from the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) until our own time, that the one who deliberately does not pray without any excuse until the time for the prayer is over is a kaafir.

The ending of the time means delaying Zuhr until sunset and delaying Maghrib until the sun rises.

The end of the times for prayer was set as described above because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) joined prayers at ‘Arafah and Muzdalifah and when travelling, so he prayed one of them at the time of the other. Because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) offered the first prayer at the time of the second in some cases, and the second prayer at the time of the first in other cases, the time for both became one time in cases where one has an excuse, just as the menstruating woman, if she becomes pure before sunset, is commanded to pray both Zuhr and ‘Asr, and if she becomes pure at the end of the night, she is commanded to pray both Maghrib and ‘Isha’. End quote from Ta’zeem Qadr al-Salaah (2/929).

Muhammad ibn Nasr (Allah have mercy on him) narrated that Imam Ahmad said: No one becomes a kaafir because of sin except the one who deliberately does not pray. If he does not pray until the time for the next prayer begins, he must be asked to repent three times. End quote.

It was narrated that Ibn al-Mubaarak said: Whoever deliberately does not pray with no excuse until the time is over, is a kaafir. Ta’zeem Qadr al-Salaah (2/297).

Ibn Hazm said:

We narrated from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (me Allah be pleased with him), Mu’aadh ibn Jabal, Ibn Mas’ood and a number of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), and from Ibn al-Mubaarak, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ishaaq ibn Raahawayh (may Allah have mercy on them), and from 17 of the Sahaabah in total (may Allah be pleased with them) that the one who deliberately and consciously does not offer an obligatory prayer until the time for it ends is a kaafir and an apostate. This is also the view of ‘Abd-Allah ibn al-Maajishoon, the companion of Maalik. And it was the view of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Habeeb al-Andalusi and others. End quote from al-Fasl fi’l-Milal wa’l-Ahwa’ wa’l-Nihal, 3/128.

He (may Allah have mercy on him) said: And it was narrated from ‘Umar, ‘Abd al-Rahmaan ibn ‘Awf, Mu’aadh ibn Jabal, Abu Hurayrah and others among the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) that the one who deliberately does not offer one obligatory prayer until the time for it ends is a kaafir and an apostate. End quote from al-Muhalla (2/15).

This view was also expressed in fatwas by the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas, led by Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him).

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (6/50, 40)

Some of the scholars quoted as evidence for this opinion the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “Whoever does not pray ‘Asr, all his good deeds are cancelled out.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari (528), because cancellation of good deeds can only happen as a result of becoming a kaafir, and because of what has been quoted above from the Sahaabah who narrated these hadeeths.

With regard to the second opinion, which is that the one who does not pray does not become a kaafir unless he gives up prayer altogether, this is the view of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him), although he also ruled to be a kaafir the one who misses some prayers and is called by the ruler to pray but does not pray. He also stated that the one who prays sometimes and does not pray sometimes, if he resolves in his heart to give up prayer altogether, then he is inwardly a kaafir, i.e., it is between him and Allah, may He be exalted.

See: Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 22/49, 7/715; Sharh al-‘Umdah, 2/94.

This was also the view of Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: What appears to be the case from the evidence is that he does not become a kaafir unless he gives up prayer all the time, in the sense that he has decided not to pray, so he does not pray Zuhr, ‘Asr, Maghrib, ‘Isha’ or Fajr. This is the one who is a kaafir. But if he prays one or two obligatory prayers, then he is not a kaafir and he cannot truly be described as having given up prayer. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Between a man and shirk and kufr stands his giving up prayer (al-salaah)” and he did not say “salaah (a prayer)”. End quote from al-Sharh al-Mumti’ (2/26).

We could not find any written comment of his concerning one who only offers Friday prayer, but we asked him about that verbally and he replied that it seems that he does become a kaafir because Friday prayer is one of 35 prayers in the week, so the one who only prays Friday prayer

can be described as giving up prayer altogether so he could become a kaafir as a result.

And Allah knows best.