9561 - It is difficult for him to pray because his work is hard

the question

Do you call one who prays Salaah 1 or 2 or 3 times a day a kaafir ? It is not easy for normal humans to pray 5 times a day as even Prophet Musa during Mi'raj said it would be difficult for our Prophet's ummah to fulfill this. But he still said we are from his ummah. And we have belief in the articles of faith. But we do not get paid to pray like Imaams or paid to be scholars and do Islamic research. We have families and children who we look after and work 12 hours a day toiling in physical and mental activities to earn bread and so it is hard to fulfill all salaahs out of tiredness. Do you still consider us to be kaafirs even though we pray some of the salaah and pay zakaah and fast in Ramadan and believe in the articles of faith ? This is very important for me to know.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Allaah has enjoined upon His slaves five prayers every day, day and night. He has commanded them to observe these prayers regularly and establish them, and He praises those who do so. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And perform As-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat, and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allaah) along with Ar-Raaki‘oon (those who bow or submit themselves to Allaah)” [al-Baqarah 2:43]

“Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawaat (the prayers) especially the middle Salaat (i.e. the best prayer - ‘Asr). And stand before Allaah with obedience [and do not speak to others during the Salaat (prayers)]” [al-Baqarah 2:238]

“Successful indeed are the believers.

Those who offer their Salaat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness” [al-Mu’minoon

23:1-2]

“And those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) Salawaat (prayers) (at their fixed stated hours).” [al-Mu’minoon 23:9]

So you have to pay attention to establishing regular prayer and keeping it up, and focusing on it, and taking the specific means of achieving that, so that you may be one of the successful. Do not worry yourself by thinking about the ruling on one who misses one or two prayers and whether he is a kaafir or not.

Whoever deliberately misses a prayer exposes himself to the wrath of Allaah, and the wise believer does not do something which he knows could result in punishment, even if it is not kufr as such. The five daily prayers, and all other acts of worship, and avoiding what is forbidden – none of this can be achieved except with patience. These are things which people find difficult by nature, because they come between a person and some of his desires.The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Paradise is surrounded by things which are disliked.” The issue of prayer in Islam is very important. Hence the responsible adult is not let off prayer for as long as he is alive and he is in his right mind. But Allaah has made things easier for His slaves with regard to the duty of praying. He allows us to join prayers and shorten them whilst travelling, and He allows us tojoin prayers when we are not travelling if not doing so will cause greater hardship. He allows the sick person to pray according to what he can do, standing, sitting or lying on his side. Hence we know that being busy earning a living is not an excuse for not praying. But if there is some unusual hardship involved, it is permissible to pray Zuhr and ‘Asr together at the time of either of them, and to pray Maghrib and ‘Isha’ together at the time of either of them.

Allaah commanded us to stop trading in order to pray Jumu’ah (Friday prayers), and He praised those who do not let trades or sales divert them from the remembrance of Allaah. So strive to do the prayers on time and in congregation. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Praying in congregation is twenty-seven times better than praying alone.”

Note that praying regularly is one of the greatest means of attaining the mercy of Allaah and His

pleasure and His Paradise, which is the main goal.It is also a means of making earning one’s provision easier, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And enjoin al-salaah (the prayer) onyour family, and bepatient in offering them[i.e., the prayers].We ask not of you a provision (i.e., to give Us something: money, etc.); We provide for you. And the good end (i.e., Paradise) is for the muttaqoon (pious).”

[Ta-Ha 20:132]

The Muslim does not ask people for any reward for his worhip of his Lord. He prays for Allaah, he fasts for Allaah, he does Hajj for Allaah, and he hopes for the reward of Allaah. When you say we do not get get paid to pray like the imaams, this is a mistake in your way ofthinking. It is not permissible for the imaam to take a salary for doing the prayers; imaams and muezzins are being paid for doing a job which requires them to to be present at the mosque every time (so that they can devote their time to doing their duties of leading prayers, giving khutbahs, issuing fatwas and judging between people). But it is better for a Muslim to fulfil the duties of an imaam or muezzin voluntarily, hoping for the reward of Allaah.

When you say we have families, children, etc… this is not an excuse for missing some of the prayers. You have to devote some of your time to doing the prayers. It is only a small amount of time, for each prayer, doing it and preparing for it, does not take more than a quarter of an hour.

If you do give up some of the prayers because you are too busy seeking provision, we will not confirm that you are a kaafir, but we will say that you are a sinner who is committing a major sin. We have already stated above that in cases of unusual difficulty you can put Zuhr and ‘Asr together at the time of either ofthem,. We also remind you that it is essential to pray fajr at the right time, which is from the start of dawn until the sun rises.

May Allaah help us and you to obey Him.