

The ruling on the one who abandons prayer (Part 2)

source: silsilat ul-ahādīth us-sahīha ~ the series of authentic narrations ~ hadīth no. 87

Hudhaifa bin al-Yamān said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “Islām will be erased just as the decoration of a garment is (worn out and) erased, until it will not be known what is fasting, nor prayer, nor the rituals of Hajj, nor charity; and the Book of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, (i.e., the Qur’ān) will be taken away (from the *mus-hafs*¹ and breasts of the people)² in one night such that not (even) an *āyah* from it will remain on earth. And groups of people will remain – the old people – saying: ‘We saw our forefathers upon this statement: *‘lā ilāha illAllāh* (none has the right to worshiped but Allāh),’ so we also say it.”

(Then), Silah bin Zufar said to Hudhaifa: ‘What will *‘lā ilāha illAllāh*’ benefit them when they don’t know what is prayer, nor fasting, nor the rituals of Hajj, nor charity?’ Hudhaifa turned away from him. Then (Silah) repeated it to (Hudhaifa) three times, and every time Hudhaifa would turn away from him. Then he turned toward him on the third time and said three times: ‘O Silah! It will save them from the Fire.’”³

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¹ the actual plural word in Arabic for *mus-haf* is *masāhif*, i.e., copies of the Qur’ān

² this explanation and detail in the parentheses was mentioned by Shaykh ‘Abd ul-Muhsin al-‘Abbād in *Sharh Sunan ibn Mājah*, tape #293

³ also refer to *Sahīh ibn Mājah* #3289

Shaykh al-Albāni comments:

“There is an important benefit of *fiqh* in the *hadīth*, which is that bearing witness that *lā ilāha illAllāh* (none has the right to be worshiped but Allāh) saves the one who says it (sincerely) from dwelling forever in the Fire on the Day of Resurrection, even if he didn't use to perform any of the other pillars of Islām at all, such as prayer and so on. And it is known that the scholars have differed about the ruling on the one who abandons the prayer especially while believing in its legislation. So the majority was of the opinion that he has not disbelieved by that, but rather disobeyed Allāh; and Ahmad - in a report - was of the opinion that he has disbelieved, and that he is to be killed due to apostasy, not as a prescribed punishment. And it is has been authentically narrated from the Companions that they did not consider leaving any of the actions to be disbelief except the prayer; at-Tirmithī and al-Hākim reported it.⁴

And I believe that that which is correct is the view of the majority, and that what was mentioned from the Companions does not clearly state that they meant by ‘disbelief’ here to be the disbelief which will make its possessor dwell forever in the Fire and for which it is not possible that Allāh will forgive him. How can that be when this is Hudhaifa bin al-Yamān - who is one of the foremost of those Companions - responding to Silah bin Zufar, who was about to understand the affair as Ahmad's understanding of it. So (Silah) said: ‘What will ‘*lā ilāha illAllāh*’ benefit them when they don't know what is prayer. . .,’ then Hudhaifa replied to him after his turning away from him, saying three times: ‘O Silah! It will save them from the Fire.’ Therefore, this is a clear statement from Hudhaifa رضي الله عنه that the one who abandons the prayer is not a disbeliever [if he believes in its legislation], but rather a Muslim who will be saved from dwelling

⁴ *Sahīh at-Tirmithī* #2622

forever in the Fire on the Day of Resurrection. So be mindful of this,
for indeed you may not find it in other than this place.”

~ asaheeha translations ~