

Section 15: To cut short prayer while travelling

Shortening of the Daily prayers while in travel –Prayer while in the battle

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 101

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ
يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا

101. "And when you are journeying in the land, it is not sin for you that you shorten the prayer, if you fear that those who disbelieve afflict you. Verily, the infidels are your manifest enemy."

Next to the former discussion upon Holy struggle and Emigration, the holy Qur'an refers to the subject of a Muslim's prayer when the one is in Journey.

The Qur'anic phrase / darabtum-fil-'ard / 'you go from one place to another', is an implicit declaration of travelling, because a traveller pounds the land under his feet. (This meaning is narrated from Mufrad'at Raqib, an Arabic dictionary)

The Qur'an sometimes applies the sense of 'it is not sin for you' instead of 'obligation'. This verse contains this sense, too.

Curtil worship has not been specified to the aspects of fear alone, but since there is usually fear when a person travels, the phrase 'if you fear' has been mentioned in the verse. Or, since at first the law of curtil worship had been ordained for the circumstances of fear and, afterward, it has been generalized upon every journey, this phrase (if you fear) has been applied here.

Explanations

1. Establishing prayers can never be stopped, but it can have alleviation.
2. Seeing the truth and flexibility is a principle in the Divine law.
3. We should not be inattentive of the enemy even while we are establishing prayers. Policy and religiosity, worship and intelligence are not separate from each other. Our hands should be busy both for prayers and for weapon.
4. Infidelity and faith are in contrast with each other.

"... Verily the infidels are your manifest enemy."

5. It seems that all disbelievers are considered as one force in hostility against you. That is why the Arabic word / 'aduww / 'enemy', mentioned in the verse, is used in the singular form, not in the plural form.

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 102

وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَدَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا

102. "And when you are among them (Muslim forces) and keep up the prayer for them, then let a party of them stand up (in prayer) with you, carrying their arms. Then when they have performed (their) prostrations, let them (continue the second unit solitarily and) take their precaution in your rear, and let another party who have not prayed come and pray with you (from the second unit), and let them take their precautions and their arms; (for) those who disbelieve desire that you should be heedless of your weapons and your baggage, then they would attack you all at once. And it is no sin for you to lay down your arms if you are annoyed with rain or if you are sick, but take your precautions. Verily Allah has prepared a disgraceful chastisement for the infidels."

In the sixth year AH the holy Prophet (S), accompanied some believers, set out towards Mecca. On the way, when they reached the region of Hudaibiyyah, they encountered with Khalid-ibn-Walid supported

by two hundred men who had sheltered thereabout and were waiting for hindering the Prophet (S) from arriving in Mecca when Bilal said the prayer call and the prayer was established. Khalid-ibn-Walid devised to profit by the time when all Muslims were busy establishing the evening prayer and to attack them at a single instance.

The verse was revealed and informed the Prophet (S) of the plot. So, seeing that miracle appeared through divine revelation, Khalid embraced Islam.

In this prayer, after performing the first unit of prayer, the first group stand up and complete the rest of the prayer, but the prayer leader waits a little so that the other group may come and join the second unit of the prayer carrying their weapons.

"And when you are among them (Muslim forces) and keep up the prayer for them, then let a party of them stand up (in prayer) with you, carrying their arms. Then when they have performed (their) prostrations, let them (continue the second unit solitarily and) take their precaution in your rear, and let another party who have not prayed come and pray with you (from the second unit), and let them take their precautions and their arms; (for) those who disbelieve desire that you should be heedless of your weapons and your baggage, then they would attack you all at once...."

Thus, in no condition prayer can be dropped and never a striver is without establishing prayer. There must be weapon in one hand and spirituality in the other.

For the importance of the congregation prayer mentioning only this fact is enough that, when facing the enemy in the battle-field, even one unit of the prayer is to be established either.

It should also be noticed that when two duties come forth with together (i.e. holy struggle and prayer) one must not be sacrificed for the other.

By the way, self-consciousness is always necessary. Even at the time of establishing prayer, Muslims should not be neglectful of the danger of the enemy. So, in no circumstances a striver must be in distance with the protective means. (If he has not any weapon, he should wear armour). It is for the caution that if the enemy attacks he can protect himself until the help comes.

"...but take your precautions."

Yet, since there may necessarily come forth some occasions that it is difficult to carry both the weapons and the protective means with together; when keeping up the prayers, at the end of the above mentioned verse it ordains such:

"... And it is no sin for you to lay down your arms if you are annoyed with rain or if you are sick..."

You should follow acting these instructions and be assured that victory is with you, because:

"... Verily Allah has prepared a disgraceful chastisement for the infidels."

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 103

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا

103. "Then when you have finished the prayer, remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining. Then, when you are secure, (from danger) establish the prayer (as usual). Verily the prayer, at fixed times has been enjoined upon the believers."

The Importance of Prayers, a Commandment!

Following the instruction of '*prayer of fear*' mentioned in the previous verse, and the necessity of establishing prayer even while you are fighting, it continues saying in this verse:

"Then when you have finished the prayer, remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining. ..."

The purpose of the phrase: '*remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining*' may have been the same different warfare positions in which soldiers sometimes use the various weapons designed for wars including the means of shooting. ,

Another attitude indicates that the purpose of this phrase is that in 4 all conditions including: standing, sitting and reclining, whether you are healthy or sick, and even when you are struggling against the enemy, remember *Allah*. 1

In fact, the above-mentioned verse is a hint to an Islamic important instruction which denotes that: establishing prayers at the appointed times do not mean that a person neglects the remembrance of *Allah* in other times.

Then the Qur'an informs us that the instruction for the 'prayer of fear' is an exceptional commandment, and as soon as the condition of fear removes the circumstance will be as follows:

"... Then, when you are secure (from danger) establish the prayer (as usual)..."

The secret of all these instructions and recommendations is for the fact that prayer is one of the Divine certain obligations which is enjoined for all dynasties and in all times, because it is not separated from Faith.

However, according to some Islamic traditions, the Arabic word /mauqut/, mentioned in the holy verse,

has been rendered into 'a fixed obligatory at an appointed time'. 2

"... Verily the prayer at fixed times has been enjoined upon the believer."

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 104

وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ
مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

104. "And do not flag in pursuit of the enemy. If you suffer pain, then they also suffer, in as you suffer. But you hope from Allah what they do not hope. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. "

The Occasion of Revelation

It is narrated from Ibn Abbas that after the painful events of the Battle of 'Uhud, the holy Prophet (S) stood upon Mount Uhud when Abu Sufyan shouted with a victorious tone; "O' Muhammad! One day we won, but another day!" That is, this very victory that we have is instead of that defeat we suffered in the Battle of Badr." The Prophet (S) told the Muslims to answer him immediately, and they said:

"Never is our situation like yours. Our martyrs are in heaven while your slains are in Hell."

Abusufyan shouted: "We have Al-'Uzza, but you have not it." The Prophet (S) told Muslims to reply that slogan by saying:

"Allah is our guardian but you have no guardian."

Abusufyan, who felt himself weak before that lively Islamic motto, left out the idol 'Uzza and attached the idol called Hubal. He cried: "High be Hubal!"

The Prophet (S) commanded Muslims to condemn the motto of the Age of Ignorance with a stronger and better motto. They would say:

"Allah is the Higher and the Exalted."

Abusufyan, who made no gain from his own different mottoes, cried: "Our trysting-place is the region of Badr-i-Suqra."

Muslims returned from the battle-field while they were seriously annoyed of the painful events in 'Uhud. At that time the verse was revealed and warned them not to flag in pursuit of the pagans, and not to be annoyed of those painful events.

This occasion of revelation teaches us that Muslims should not be neglectful of none of the enemy's styles. They should apply some stronger logics before the logic of the enemies, and some better weapons against their weapons, else, the circumstances may change for the benefit of the enemy.

Therefore, in any time, like our time, instead of regret for the painful events and terrible corruptions that have surrounded Muslims from every side, they should actively set forth and produce some sound and useful books and publications in front of the enemies' evil books and publications.

They should utilize the best and modern propaganda means of the time against the enemy's equipped means of propaganda. To stand against the designs, philosophies, and doctrines that different political, economical and social schools introduce, Muslims must offer the inclusive Islamic designs to all human kind. It is only by this method that they can protect their being and live as a progressive group in the world.

Following the verses concerning the Holy struggle and migration, to stir the spirit of self-sacrifice in Muslims, this verse says:

"And do not flag in pursuit of the enemy..."

This statement is a hint to the fact that to stand against the arrogant enemy, you should preserve the spirit of attack in yourselves, because, psychologically it has an extraordinary effect in knocking down the spirit of the enemy.

Then, it states a clear and living reasoning for this commandment, and says why you may linger while:

"... If you suffer pain, then they also suffer pain as you suffer. But you hope from Allah what they do not hope..."

And, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an emphasizes more and implies that all these annoyances, injuries, efforts and endeavours, and, perhaps, indulgences and negligence are not hidden from the knowledge of *Allah*. It says:

"... And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

Thus, you will see the result of all of them.

1. Makhzan-ul-'Irfan, vol. 2, p. 150 & Tafsir-ul-Burhan, vol. 1, p. 413.

2. Tafsir-ul-Burhan, vol. 1, p. 412 and some other commendations.

<https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-4/section-15-cut-short-prayer-while-travelling>