66900 - He missed some prayers during Ramadaan because he was asleep. What does he have to do?

the question

During the month of fasting I feel so tired that if I sleep, I miss two or more obligatory prayers and I feel that I am sinning. My question is: If I sleep and miss Zuhr and ‘Asr until Maghrib comes, and I am afraid that the time for Maghrib is about to end, what should I do?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Not offering the prayers at the proper time is a serious matter, concerning which Allaah has issued a stern warning, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salaah (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salaah (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell”

[Maryam 19:59]

With regard to what is meant by ghayy (translated here as “Hell”):

Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: it means loss. Qataadah said it means evil. ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Mas’ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) said it is a valley in Hell that is very deep and its food is foul.

See: Tafseer Ibn Katheer (3/172).

It was said to Ibn Mas’ood (may Allaah be pleased with him): Allaah often mentions prayer in the Qur’aan: “Except those who are devoted to Salaah (prayers)” [al-Ma’aarij 70:23], “And those who

strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) Salawaat (prayers) (at their fixed stated hours)" [al-Mu'minoon 23:9, al-Ma'aarij 70:34], "So woe unto those performers of Salaah (prayers) (hypocrites), Those who delay their Salaah (prayer from their stated fixed times)" [al-Ma'oon 107:5]. He said: That warning is about (not praying) on time. They said: O Abu 'Abd al-Rahmaan, we thought it was about not praying at all. He said: Not praying at all is kufr.

Ta'zeem Qadr al-Salaah by al-Marwazi (2/5). The editor said its isnaad is hasan.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) mentioned praying and missing an obligatory prayer as being some of the reasons for which a person will be punished in the grave. See the answer to question no. 46068 to learn more about the horror and intensity of this punishment. We ask Allaah to keep us safe and sound.

There follows an exhortation from the great Sahaabi 'Abd-Allaah ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him), in which he speaks eloquently of the ruling on prayer in congregation, the situation of the one who fails to pray in congregation, the reward of the one who goes to prayer, and the situation of the one who is eager to go and stand in the row even though he is excused.

He said: "Whoever would like to meet Allaah, may He be exalted, tomorrow as a Muslim, let him regularly offer these prayers where the call to prayer is given, for Allaah has prescribed the Sunnahs of guidance to your Prophet (S) and they (the prayers) are among the Sunnahs of guidance. If you pray in your houses like this one who stays away from the mosque prays in his house, you will have forsaken the Sunnah of your Prophet, and if you forsake the Sunnah of your Prophet you will go astray." [This is what he said about one who offers the prayer on time, but he does not pray in congregation in the mosque, and prays in his house. So what about one who does not pray until the time is over altogether!] Then he said: There is no man who purifies himself and purifies himself well, then he goes to one of these mosques, but Allaah will record one good deed for him for every step he takes, and will raise him in status one degree thereby, and will erase one bad deed thereby. I remember when no one would stay away but a hypocrite whose hypocrisy was known, and a man would come staggering between two others in order to stand in the row. Narrated by Muslim (654).

It is not right for a Muslim to fast only in the month of Ramadaan. During the year there are other virtuous days when it is mustahabb to fast, such as the day of ‘Arafah and ‘Ashoora’. During the week it is mustahabb to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. During every month it is mustahabb to fast three days of the month. If you accustomed yourself to fasting all year round, you would not experience such hardship that makes you sleep all day and miss the prayers.

You have to adopt the means that will wake you up for prayer. It is not permissible for you to deliberately miss prayers on the basis of sleeping when you are able to wake up at the time for prayer.

You should look at the reason why you are so tired when fasting. If it is because of work, then you should weigh up work and fasting, and if you do not have to work, and you cannot fast, pray and do other acts of worship because of work, then you should take a leave of absence from work during the fasting month. See the answer to question no. 65803 and 43772. If the reason is staying up late at night, then it haraam for you to stay up late if that is causing you to miss prayers until the time for them is over.

You have to advise your family members, wife and children to wake up for prayer, and they have to help you to obey Allaah and offer the prayers on time.

If you have adopted the means and are still not able to wake up because of intense tiredness or sickness, and the time for prayer has ended, then you must make up the prayers that you have missed in the proper order. So you should pray Zuhr and then ‘Asr and so on, unless you fear that the time for the second prayer is about to end, in which case you should start with that. If you wake up before the sun sets and you have not prayed Zuhr and ‘Asr, and so little time is left for ‘Asr that the sun is about to set, then start with ‘Asr, then pray Zuhr after that, then Maghrib.

We ask Allaah, may He be exalted, to help you to obey Him and worship Him well, and to make you more keen to do good.

Please also see the answers to questions no. 38158 and 47123.

And Allaah knows best.