

186002 - Ruling on one who deliberately does not pray Jumu`ah three times in a row

the question

If someone misses Jumu`ah three times in a row because he stayed up late the night before, then he slept in on the following day, is there a specific repentance for this sin? I know that there is a hadith in Sunan Abi Dawud and an-Nasa'i which says that whoever deliberately does not pray Jumu`ah three times – I do not know whether it mentions doing that consecutively or mentions it in general terms – then Allah will place a seal on his heart. How authentic is this hadith? I also heard that if someone misses Jumu`ah three times, he must utter the Shahadatayn (twin declaration of faith) anew in the presence of two witnesses, meaning that the one who misses it three times in a row becomes a disbeliever. Is this true? From what I have read and seen of the views of scholars and seekers of knowledge, this seal that Allah places on the heart does not necessarily mean apostasy from Islam; rather the aim is to issue a stern warning against doing this, and to urge people to repent quickly. Is this the more correct interpretation?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

Abu Dawud (1052), at-Tirmidhi (500) and an-Nasa'i (1369) narrated from Abul-Ja`d ad-Damri (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever does not pray Jumu`ah three times in a row out of heedlessness concerning it, Allah will place a seal on his heart." Shaykh al-Albani classed it as authentic (sahih) in *Sahih al-Jami`*.

Ibn Majah (1126) narrated that Jabir ibn `Abdillah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever does not pray Jumu`ah three times, for no necessary reason, Allah will place a seal on his heart." Shaykh al-Albani classed it as authentic (hasan) in *Sahih al-Jami`*.

Al-Manawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Allah will place a seal on his heart” means: He will seal it, cover it and prevent His blessings from reaching it, and He will place in it ignorance, harshness and hardness, or cause his heart to become the heart of a hypocrite. (*Fayd al-Qadir*, 6/133).

In some reports, that is limited to when a person misses it three times in a row. In *Musnad at-Tayalisi* it is narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever does not pray Jumu`ah three times in a row with no valid excuse, Allah will place a seal on his heart.” According to another hadith: “Whoever does not pray Jumu`ah three times in a row for no necessary reason, Allah will place a seal on his heart.” Al-Albani classed it as authentic (sahih) in *Sahih al-Jami`*.

Abul-Hasan al-Mubarakfuri (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Three Jumu`ahs”: ash-Shawkani said: It may be that what is meant is not praying Jumu`ah in all cases, whether that happens consecutively or not, and even if a person misses one Jumu`ah every year, Allah will place the seal on his heart after the third time, which is the apparent meaning of the hadith. Or it may be that what is meant is three consecutive Jumu`ahs, as mentioned in the hadith of Anas that was narrated by ad-Daylami in *Musnad al-Firdaws*, because committing any sin several times in a row and persisting in it may indicate that a person is careless about it. I say: the second possibility (that is, three times in a row) is what must be correct, on the basis of the rule which says that reports with general wording are to be understood in the light of reports with specific wording, and the hadith of Anas is supported by what Abu Ya`la narrated from the narrators of *As-Sahih* from Ibn `Abbas: Whoever misses Jumu`ah for three weeks in a row has cast Islam behind his back. (*Mirqat al-Mafatih Sharh Mishkat al-Masabih*, 4/446).

Secondly:

The placing of the seal on the heart that is mentioned in the hadiths quoted above does not necessarily mean that the owner of that heart becomes a disbeliever; rather it comes under the heading of a warning that is mentioned in the religious texts and is applicable to both Muslims and disbelievers.

At-Tirmidhi (3334) narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “When a person commits a sin, a black spot appears on his heart. But if he give it up, seeks forgiveness and repents, his heart will be cleansed, but if he repeats it, (the black spot) will increase until it overwhelms his heart. This is the stain which Allah mentions: {Nay; rather their hearts have been covered with the stain of their misdeeds} [al-Mutaffifin 83:14].” Al-Albani classed it as authentic (hasan) in Sahih at-Tirmidhi.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said, narrating from Mujahid who said: They used to think that the stain was the seal [on the heart]. (*Fat-h al-Bari*, 8/696).

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

If sins accumulate, a seal is placed on the heart of the sinner, and he becomes one of the heedless, as one of the early generations said about the verse: {Nay; rather their hearts have been covered with the stain of their misdeeds} [al-Mutaffifin 83:14]. He said: That is, sin after sin. (*Al-Jawab al-Kafi*, p. 60).

Shaykh `Abd al-`Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Whoever does not attend Jumu`ah prayer with the Muslims because of a legitimate excuse such as sickness and the like, or for any other reason, should pray Zuhr. Similarly, women should pray Zuhr, as should travellers. People living in the wilderness should pray Zuhr, as is indicated by the hadith texts. This is the view of most of the scholars, and no attention should be paid to those who hold odd views. The same applies to one who deliberately does not attend Jumu`ah. He should repent to Allah, may He be Glorified, and pray Zuhr instead. (*Majmu` Fatawa Ibn Baz*, 12/332).

See also the answer to question no. [7699](#).

And Allah knows best.