

Explanation of Allaah's saying: There is no compulsion in religion

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: Some colleagues say that a person who does not accept Islaam is free and we should not force them to it. They support their claim by Allaah's saying (*Exalted be He*), **[So, will you (O Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him)) then compel mankind, until they become believers.]**¹ Allaah (*Exalted be He*) also says, **[There is no compulsion in religion.]**² What is your opinion on this claim?

Shaykh Bin Baaz (*May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him*): Scholars state that these two noble Ayahs (Qur'aanic verses) and similar Ayahs were revealed regarding the people who pay Jizyah (poll tax required from non-Muslims living in an Islaamic state), such as the Jews, the Christians and the Magi. Those people should not be forced to embrace Islaam; they should rather be given the choice either to accept Islaam or pay Jizyah. Some scholars held that this ruling was in force during the early days of Islaam, but later on it was abrogated by Allaah's command to fight and make Jihaad (striving in the Cause of Allaah). According to this opinion, a non-Muslim who refuses to embrace Islaam must be fought until he accepts Islaam or pays Jizyah if he meets its conditions. Thus, it is obligatory to oblige the Kaafirs (disbelievers) to accept Islaam, if they are not among those who pay Jizyah, because their conversion to Islaam brings about their happiness and salvation in the worldly life and the Hereafter. Obliging a person to adhere to the truth, in which their guidance and happiness lie, is better for them than remaining on falsehood, exactly like a person forced to fulfil the duties they owe to another person even if by jail or beating. Obliging the Kaafirs to believe in Tawheed (monotheism) and embrace Islaam is more preferable and appealing, because it brings them happiness in this worldly life and in the Hereafter unless they belong to the People of the Book, such as the Jews, Christians or the Magi. Islaam ordained that those three sects should be given the option either to embrace Islaam or pay Jizyah in full submission. A group of scholars hold the opinion that all Kaafirs are part of those three sects in this ruling; they should be given the option either to embrace Islaam or to pay Jizyah, but the preponderant opinion is that this ruling is only applied to these three sects. This is because the Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) fought the Kaafirs inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula and did not accept anything from them except Islaam. Allaah (*Exalted be He*) says,

¹ سورة يونس - Soorah Yoonus [10:99]

² سورة البقرة - Soorah al-Baqarah [2:256]

Explanation of Allaah's saying: There is no compulsion in religion

[Then when the Sacred Months (the 1st, 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islaamic calendar) have passed, then kill the Mushrikoon wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent and perform as-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat, then leave their way free. Verily, Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.]³

Allaah (*Exalted be He*) does not say, "or if they pay Jizyah", so the Jews, the Christians and the Magi should be requested to embrace Islaam; if they refuse, they should pay Jizyah; if they refuse to do that as well, it is obligatory on Muslims to fight them when possible. Allaah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says,

[Fight against those who (1) believe not in Allaah, (2) nor in the Last Day, (3) nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allaah and His Messenger Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) (4) and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth (i.e. Islaam) among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.]⁴

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) collected Jizyah from the Magi. However, it was not authentically reported from the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) or his Sahabah (Companions, (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with them*)) that they collected Jizyah from other than the three sects mentioned above. This is based on Allaah's saying (*Exalted be He*),

[And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allaah) and (all and every kind of) worship is for Allaah (Alone).]⁵

He (*Exalted be He*) also says,

[Then when the Sacred Months (the 1st, 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islaamic calendar) have passed, then kill the Mushrikoon wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent and perform as-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat), and give Zakaat, then leave their way free. Verily, Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.]⁶

This Ayah is called the Ayah of the Sword, which, in addition to similar Ayahs, abrogated the ones stating that there is no compulsion in accepting Islaam. May Allaah grant us success.

³ سورة التوبة – Soorah at-Tawbah [9:5]

⁴ سورة التوبة – Soorah at-Tawbah [9:29]

⁵ سورة البقرة – Soorah al-Baqarah [2:193]

⁶ سورة التوبة – Soorah at-Tawbah [9:5]