

Ṣāliḥ Āli-Shaykh¹ on Praying for the Absolute Destruction of Jews & Christians²

Question: We have read a verdict from you published in “al-Da’wah” magazine that one should not pray for the overall destruction of Jews and Christians. Hearing this, we were confused by the seemingly contrasting supplication of prophet Nūh (Noah عليه السلام). We hope you will explain this verdict of yours with the evidence.

Answer: This is similar to the question that was asked when I visited al-Da’wah Publications that publishes “al-Da’wah” magazine. I have mentioned many times in the past that doing such a thing is not in accordance with the fundamentals of our belief and creed. The supplication for the overall destruction of nonbelievers was specific to prophet Nūh (Noah عليه السلام). The messengers after him did not pray inclusively for absolute destruction of all nonbelievers. Allah (ﷻ) said:

﴿ وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ﴾

And Nūh said, “My Lord, do not leave upon the earth a single one of the disbelievers.”

[Sūrah Nūh, 71:26]

Yet, an angel said to prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (after being rejected and persecuted by his people), “If you want, I will crush the two mountains upon the people of Mecca.” The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) replied saying:

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² This fatwá was taken from a book called “al-Fatāwá al-Shar’iyyah fī al-Qadhāyá Al-‘Asriyyah,” a collection of various rulings by Muhammad Ibn Fahd al-Ḥusayn.

بَلْ أَرْجُو أَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ مِنْ أَصْلَابِهِمْ مَنْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا

“No, I hope Allah will bring out from their progeny people who’ll worship Allah alone ascribing no partner to Him.”³

The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) also once condemned some of the foremost and harshest of the leaders of disbelief, so the following verse was revealed to him, as is mentioned in “Kitāb al-Tawhīd”, Allah revealed:

﴿ لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴾

You have nothing to do with the decision, whether He pardons them or punishes them. Indeed, they are the transgressors.

[Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān, 3:128]

The guidance of the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his companions regarding their supplications against nonbelievers is that they would only pray specifically against the transgressors and unjust among them, the oppressors, or those who openly wage war against Islam and its people. This is also illustrated in the supplication of ‘Umar when he was in prayer:

“Oh Allah, deal with the disbelievers from the People of the Book that hinder others from Your religion and that fight Your righteous servants.”

As for praying against all Jews and Christians for their overall extermination, this is not permissible in Islam. It is a form of going to extremes in supplication. This is because Allah has already informed us that the Jews and Christians will remain until the appearance of the Anti-Christ (al-Masīḥ al-Dajjāl) towards the end of time. So, if someone prays to Allah for Him to remove all of them now before the Anti-Christ appears, then this is a contradiction and a form of objection to what Allah has already decreed with His wisdom and capability in that He will make them remain until the end of time. For this, it

³ Recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 3231) and Muslim (1795) from the ḥadīth of ‘Āishah, may Allah be pleased with her.

has never been narrated from anyone of the Salaf, or from the major scholars of Islam that they supplicated with an overall prayer against the Jews and Christians. Instead, they would supplicate with a specific prayer only against those who fight, wage war, or harm the believers.⁴

⁴ Taken from the cassette: *Asbāb al-Thabāt 'alá al-Dīn*.