

Playing the Qur'aan (on tape) while not Listening to it

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

Question: In the case where a recorder is turned on and the recitation of the noble Qur'aan is played, but some of the surrounding people do not listen to it because they're busy talking with one another, what is the ruling concerning their not listening to the Qur'aan? Are these people sinning or just the person who plays the Qur'aan on the recorder?

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said: The answer to this issue varies depending on the different scenarios in which the Qur'aan is being recited from the recorder. So if the scenario is a gathering of knowledge, remembrance and the recitation of the Qur'aan, then in this situation, it is obligatory to pay complete attention to it. And whoever doesn't do so, is sinning because he is disobeying Allaah's statement in the Qur'aan: **"And when the Qur'aan is recited, then listen to it and remain silent, in order that you may receive mercy."**¹

And if it is not a gathering of knowledge, remembrance and recitation of the Qur'aan, but rather, a normal gathering, such as when a person works at home or studies or researches, then in this situation it is not permissible for this person to turn the recorder on and raise the volume of the recitation such that the sound reaches the ears of the other people inside the house or gathering. This is since, in this scenario, these people are not responsible for listening to the Qur'aan, since they did not gather for that occasion. The one who will be held accountable is the person who raises the volume on the recorder and causes everyone else to hear it. This is since he is burdening the people and forcing them to listen to the Qur'aan in a situation in which they are not prepared to do this type of listening.

The closest example we can give of this is when one of us walks down a street and hears the sounds of the butter merchant and the falafel sellers as well as the one who sells these recorded cassette tapes. So the sound of the Qur'aan fills the street, and wherever you go, you hear its sound. So are those people who walk on the street – everyone on his separate way – responsible and required to remain silent for this Qur'aan that is being recited in other than its proper place?! No, rather the one who will be held accountable is only the person who burdens the people by causing them to hear the sound of the Qur'aan, whether

¹ [Soorah Al-A'raaf: 204]

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because he does it for business purposes or because he wants to get the people's attention or for whatever other materialistic gains he does it for.

So therefore, they are treating the Qur'aan, from one perspective, as musical instruments, as occurs in some ahaadeeth.² So they are purchasing a small gain with Allaah's verses through this method, which differs from the method used by the Jews and the Christians, about whom Allaah said: **"They purchased a small gain with the verses of Allaah."**³

² Silsilat-ul-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah: 979

³ [Soorah At-Tawbah: 9]