

Eid al-Fitr on a Friday

TOPIC:

Islamic Rulings: Fataawah

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This year Eid al-Fitr may fall on a Friday in some Muslim countries especially in those which follow the naked eye sighting. Many Muslims are asking whether or not the Friday prayer is obligatory in this situation. The answer is “yes”, according to the majority’s opinion.

The Friday prayer is mandated by the Qur’an as Allah SWT has commanded in Surah al-Juma’:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَدَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
(تَعْلَمُونَ) 9)

62:9. “O ye who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday hasten earnestly to the remembrance of God, and leave off business. That is best for you if ye but knew!”

Eid prayer is decreed by Rasulullah (SAW) in a number of authentic Ahaadith. Therefore a Sunnah or Wajib Khutbah mandated by the Ahaadith cannot nullify an act of obligation (Fard) promulgated by the Holy Qur’an. Consequently, the majority of Jurists (Hanafi, Maaliki and Shafai’ scholars) have ruled that these are two distinctively separate responsibilities and must be performed at their specified times.

For instance, the renowned Hanafi jurist Ibn A’abideen states:

عِيدَانِ اجْتَمَعَا فِي يَوْمٍ وَاحِدٍ فَالْأَوَّلُ سُنَّةٌ وَالثَّانِي فَرِيضَةٌ وَلَا يُتْرَكُ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمَا

“If two Eids (Juma’ and Eid) fall on the same day then both should be performed as the first (Eidul Adha or Eidul Fitr) is Sunnah and the second (Juma’) is obligatory.”

Imam Abu Hanifah has strongly argued that the Eid and Juma’ prayers remain mandated for both the city as well as suburban residents. Imam al-Nawawi narrates:

وَقَالَ أَبُو حَنِيفَةَ لَا تَسْقُطُ الْجُمُعَةُ عَنْ أَهْلِ الْبَلَدِ وَلَا أَهْلِ الْقُرَى

“Abu Hanifah said that the obligation of Juma’ prayer is not removed from the city residents or the villagers.”

Imam al-Shafai’ has given concession (Rukhsah) to the villagers and not to the city dwellers as Imam al-Nawawi has reported.

فَقَالَ الشَّافِعِيُّ وَالْأَصْحَابُ إِذَا اتَّفَقَ يَوْمَ جُمُعَةٍ يَوْمَ عِيدٍ وَحَضَرَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى الَّذِينَ تَلَزَمَهُمُ الْجُمُعَةُ لِبُلُوغِ نِذَاءِ الْبَلَدِ فَصَلُّوا الْعِيدَ لَمْ تَسْقُطِ الْجُمُعَةُ بِإِخْلَافٍ عَنِ أَهْلِ الْبَلَدِ وَفِي أَهْلِ الْقُرَى وَجِهَانَ الصَّحِيحِ الْمُنْصَوِّصِ لِلشَّافِعِيِّ فِي الْأَمِّ وَالْقَدِيمِ أَنَّهَا تَسْقُطُ

The villagers are allowed to forego the Juma’ prayer so as to avoid the unnecessary hardship.

ولأنهم إذا قعدوا في البلد لم يتهيؤوا بالعيد فان خرجوا ثم رجعوا للجمعة كان عليهم في ذلك مشقة والجمعة تسقط بالمشقة

Some leading authorities in the Shafai’ school have disagreed with the Imam while agreeing with the Hanafi and Maaliki scholars in requiring Juma’ from both the villagers and city residents.

ومن اصحابنا من قال تجب عليهم الجمعة لان من لزمته الجمعة في غير يوم العيد وجبت عليه في يوم العيد كأهل البلد

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal has given the permission that the Eid Khutbah will suffice and people do not have to come back for Juma’ prayer. Ibn Qudamah reports that Imam Ahmad was of the opinion that Eid prayer suffices and both the villagers and city residents are permitted not to offer the Juma’ prayer except the Imam. The local Imam must offer the Juma’ prayer along with whosoever attends the Juma’ voluntarily.

وَإِنْ اتَّفَقَ عِيدٌ فِي يَوْمِ جُمُعَةٍ، سَقَطَ حُضُورُ الْجُمُعَةِ عَمَّنْ صَلَّى الْعِيدَ، إِلَّا الْإِمَامَ، فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَسْقُطُ عَنْهُ إِلَّا أَنْ لَا يَجْتَمِعَ لَهُ مَنْ يُصَلِّي بِهِ الْجُمُعَةَ

The Hanbali scholars have substantiated their case with a number of Ahaadith that appear to indicate that the Prophet (SAW) gave concession to everyone including the city residents. For instance Iyaas bin Abi Ramlah narrated that Muawiyah inquired Zaid bin Arqam whether or not he witnessed an Eid on a Friday during the

time of Rasulallah (SAW). He responded “yes.” Muawiyah further inquired about what the Prophet (SAW) did in such a situation and Zaid stated that he (SAW) offered the Eid prayer and then gave concession for Juma’ saying that “whosoever wants to perform Juma’ can do so.”

رَوَى إِبَاسُ بْنُ أَبِي رَمْلَةَ الشَّامِيُّ، قَالَ: «شَهِدْتُ مُعَاوِيَةَ يَسْأَلُ زَيْدَ بْنَ أَرْقَمَ: هَلْ شَهِدْتَ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - عِيدَيْنِ اجْتَمَعَا فِي يَوْمٍ وَاحِدٍ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: فَكَيْفَ صَنَعْتَ؟ قَالَ: صَلَّى الْعِيدَ، ثُمَّ رَخَّصَ فِي الْجُمُعَةِ، فَقَالَ: مَنْ شَاءَ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ فَلْيُصَلِّ.» . رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ

There are a number of other Ahaadith which allude to the same concession. Some of them are quoted below:

وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: «اجْتَمَعَ فِي يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا عِيدَانِ، فَمَنْ شَاءَ أَجْزَأَهُ مِنَ الْجُمُعَةِ، وَإِنَّا مُجْمَعُونَ.» . رَوَاهُ ابْنُ مَاجَةَ

اجْتَمَعَ يَوْمَ جُمُعَةٍ وَيَوْمَ عِيدٍ عَلَى عَهْدِ ابْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ فَقَالَ عِيدَانِ اجْتَمَعَا فَجَمَعَهُمَا جَمِيعًا فَصَلَّاهُمَا رَكَعَتَيْنِ بُكْرَةً لَمْ يَزِدْ عَلَيْهِمَا حَتَّى صَلَّى الْعَصْرَ " رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ

وَعَنْ عَطَاءٍ قَالَ صَلَّى " ابْنُ الزُّبَيْرِ فِي يَوْمِ عِيدٍ يَوْمَ جُمُعَةٍ أَوَّلَ النَّهَارِ ثُمَّ رُحْنَا إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ فَلَمْ يَخْرُجْ إِلَيْنَا فَصَلَّيْنَا وَحْدَانًا وَكَانَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ بِالطَّائِفِ فَلَمَّا قَدِمَ ذَكَرْنَا ذَلِكَ لَهُ فَقَالَ أَصْحَابُ السُّنَّةِ " رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ

The majority (Jamhu’r) has rejected this opinion based upon the actions of Rasulallah (SAW) and the practice of his Companions. For instance, the Prophet (SAW) did perform the Juma’ prayer after doing the Eid Khutbah on the same day. Imam Muslim has narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) used to recite Surah 87 in the first Rak’ah of the Juma’ and Eid prayers and Surah 88 in the second Rak’ah. He (SAW) did recite the same Surahs in both the Juma’ and Eid prayers whenever the Eid occurred on a Friday.

عَنِ النَّعْمَانَ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ، قَالَ: «كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقْرَأُ فِي الْعِيدَيْنِ، وَفِي الْجُمُعَةِ بِسَبْحِ اسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى، وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْعَاشِيَةِ»، قَالَ: «وَإِذَا اجْتَمَعَ الْعِيدُ وَالْجُمُعَةُ، فِي يَوْمٍ وَاحِدٍ، يَقْرَأُ بِهِمَا أَيْضًا.» . «فِي الصَّلَاتَيْنِ

Caliph Othman (RA) allowed only the Bedouins to miss the Juma’ prayer as they were non-residents. The Juma’ is not obligatory on the non-residents anyway. Imam al-Bukhari reports:

قَالَ أَبُو عُبَيْدٍ: ثُمَّ شَهِدْتُ الْعِيدَ مَعَ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَفَّانَ، فَكَانَ ذَلِكَ يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ، فَصَلَّى قَبْلَ الْخُطْبَةِ، ثُمَّ خَطَبَ فَقَالَ: «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ هَذَا يَوْمٌ قَدْ اجْتَمَعَ لَكُمْ فِيهِ عِيدَانِ، فَمَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَنْتَظِرَ الْجُمُعَةَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعَوَالِي «فَلْيَنْتَظِرْ، وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَرْجِعَ فَقَدْ أَذْنَتْ لَهُ

“Abu U’baid narrates: “Then I witnessed Eid with Othman bin Affan on a Friday. He offered the prayer before Khutbah and then addressed people saying, “O People, this is the day when two Eids have come together (meaning Eid and Juma’). Whosoever from the Bedouins can wait for Juma’ prayer then let him wait. I do allow the ones who want to return (before Juma’ prayer). “

In view of the above Othmanic ruling the majority of jurists have interpreted the above quoted Ahaadith that allude to Juma’ concession as directed to the Bedouins (villagers) and not to the city residents.

Therefore, residents should perform the Juma’ prayer along with the Eid prayer as long as doing both prayers will not cause them tremendous hardship. The permission (Rukhsah) is granted only in case of extreme hardship.

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