

May 19, 2020

Eid Prayer Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic Public Restrictions

Assalaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullah,

As we approach Eidul Fitr this year, Muslims around the globe face a very peculiar situation to celebrate Eid and especially to perform Eid prayer due to COVID-19 public gathering restrictions. We, the Muslims of British Columbia are of no exception to this. Therefore, many of us are curious to know the permissibility of Eid prayer at home in the current situation. This write up is to clarify such concerns.

Ruling of Eid Prayer

The ruling of Eid prayer varies in the four major Sunni schools of law.

Maliki and Shafi fiqh regard it as a highly stressed Sunnah prayer. As per Hanbali, it is a communal obligation, whereas, in Hanafi Fiqh, it is Wajib. (الموسوعة الفقهية: ٢٤٠/٢٧).

Eid Prayer at Home

According to Maliki, Shafi, and Hanbali, it is permissible even in regular circumstances for the one who misses the Eid salat at the mosque to perform it at home whether individually or in congregation. (مواهب الجليل: ٥٨١/٢. روضة الطالبين ٥٧٨ /١. المغني ٢٨٤ /٣)

The basis for their ruling is the practice of a companion Anas Bin Malik R.A. who performed Eid prayer at home with his family when he missed it with the Imam. (البخاري: كتاب العيدين). This is the position adopted by the Fatwa Committee of Muslim jurists of North America in view of the current situation. Please refer to their online fatwa at www.amjaonline.org.

As far as Fiqh Hanafi is concerned, among the conditions for the validity of Eid prayer is the congregation and public access to the place of worship (إذن عام). There is a consensus among Hanafi Jurists that Eid prayer can only be performed in a congregation like Jumu'ah (بدائع الصنائع: ٢١٠/٢). To accommodate both these conditions for the validity of Eid prayer at home in our current situation, a number of Hanafi scholars have permitted it with the following three conditions:

1. The person doesn't have access to the masjid;
2. It must be in the congregation of a minimum 3 adult males besides the Imam and
3. The presence of minimum one or more individuals besides one's family possibly from the neighborhood, to join the prayer. (Online Fatwa by (المفتي شاهد علي القاسمي للمعهد العالي الإسلامي،

Given the situation, we advise families to observe all the Sunnahs of Eid (i.e. ghusl, eating breakfast, wearing one's best garments, saying the general takbeerat after Fajr, etc.) and then praying a congregational prayer at home in view of the above three conditions.

Method of Performing Eid Prayer

There is a consensus that Eid prayer is of two rakaat with extra takbeerat. According to Hanbali

and Maliki, there are 7 takbeerat in the first unit inclusive of the opening takbir and 6 takbeerat in the second rakaat including takbiratul qiyam. In Fiqh Shafi, there are 7 takbirat in the first unit exclusive of the opening takbeer and the same 6 takbeerat in the second rakaat like Hanbali and Maliki (الموسوعة الفقهية). In Hanafi Fiqh, there are total 6 extra takbeerat exclusive of takbiratul Ihram, Qiyam, and Ruko' (الترمذي: أبواب العيدين).

Eid prayer method as per Hanafi Fiqh

The following intention should be made: "I intend offering two rakaats necessary (wajib) of Eid ul-Fitr prayer with six necessary takbeerat." The one leading the prayer should intend to lead the congregation as part of his niyyah. After making this intention, he should commence his prayer. He must recite the thanaa' and then say Allahu Akbar 3 times. Each time that he says Allahu Akbar, he should raise his hands to his ears just as he does for the takbeer-e-tahreemah. After making the takbeer, he should let his hands rest at his sides. In-between each takbeer, he should pause to such an extent that he can read Sub'haanallah three times. After the third takbeer, he should not rest his hands but fold them. He should then read the ta'awwudh and bismillah, Surah Faatihah, and another Surah. Thereafter, he should make his ruku and sajdah and stand up as he normally does. In the second rakaat, he should first recite Surah Faatihah and another Surah. Thereafter, he should make three takbeers but after the third takbeer, he should not fold his hands but leave them at his sides. He should then make one more takbeer, go into ruku, and complete the rest of the prayer as usual. (رد المحتار: ٣ / باب العيدين)

Eid Sermon

All four schools of law are in agreement that Eid sermon is recommended but not a condition for the validity of Eid prayer, and it is to be delivered after the Eid prayer because of the narration of Abdullah Bin Sa'ib R.A. who says, "I attended the Eid prayer with the Messenger, peace be upon him, Upon completing the prayer, he said "we shall deliver the sermon, whoever wants to sit for the sermon should sit, and whoever wants to leave should leave" (أبو داود: كتاب الصلاة). It is advised that we fulfill this Sunnah by reading any short online Arabic sermon or its transliteration. Attached is a short Eid sermon in Arabic for this purpose.

For those who are unable to perform Salatul Eid in a congregation even at home, as per Fiqh Hanafi, should pray four-rakaat Nafil prayer instead without any extra takbeers. This is reported by the famous companion Ibn Masood R.A. He said, "The one who misses the Eid prayer should perform 4 rakaat as an optional prayer" (إعلاء السنن / ١٤٧). This prayer is not a substitute for Eid Salah however, a good way to earn reward.

In conclusion, Eid is the day of joy and celebration, therefore do not hesitate to celebrate this day of joy with your family and a special treat to your children, within the limits of COVID-19 health guidelines. We ask Allah the All Mighty to accept all our ibadaat and may He deliver us from this difficult situation sooner. Ameen!

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FIRST KHUTBAH (ARABIC)

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ،
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ
أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ
الْحَمْدُ ﴿اللَّهُمَّ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ
وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ
أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ
وَمَنْ يَضِلَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ ﴿وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَمَوْلَانَا
مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ ﴿اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ
إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ ﴿

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وَعَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: فَرَضَ
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ زَكَاةَ الْفِطْرِ
طُهْرَةَ لِلصِّيَامِ مِنَ اللُّغْوِ وَالرَّفَثِ وَطُعْمَةً
لِلْمَسَاكِينِ ﴿وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ:
مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سِنًّا مِنْ شَوَالٍ كَانَ
كَصِيَامِ الدَّهْرِ ﴿اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ ﴿

