

Ease in Shariah

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic on Friday, 7 May 2010. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Islam is a religion that came to deal with legally obligated (*Mukallaf*) humans, not with angels. Angels do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded. Angels were created with strength and energy that differentiated them from human beings. Islamic legislations have distanced humans from responsibilities with anything that might exhaust them or restrict them from enjoying their lives in a pure and honest way. For example:

- When it is not possible to procure sufficient water (for excuses like fear or severe cold) then *Tayammum* can be performed instead of ablution or *Ghusl*. It can be performed by striking both hands on clean earth or dust, dusting the hands and blowing off the excess dust or earth on the hands then rubbing face and hands with them.
- In prayer, if the person can not stand up to pray for a legitimate excuse then he can pray standing, on his side or even by gestures.
- In fasting, Islam has allow the sick and the traveller not to fast as ‘necessity makes permissible what is normally forbidden’

Indeed, all partial aspects of Islamic law came with an ease combined with them. Allah says “He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty” [Al-Hajj 22:78] and in another verse “Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship” [Al-Baqarah 2:185]. The prophet (pbuh) said: “Religion (Islam) is easy and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way, So avoid extremes and strike a balance” and in another hadith “cheer the people up by conveying glad tidings to them and do not repulse (them) as you have been sent to make things easy (for the people) and you have not been sent to make things difficult for them”. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her and her father) said: ‘The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was never given a choice between two things, but that he chose the easier of the two as long as it was not a sin, i.e. forbidden’.

Oh Muslims,

Prayer is a worship which is performed at specified times as Allah says “Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times” [Al-Nisaa 4:103]. The prophet (pbuh) taught us these times by his verbal and practical Sunnah. Every prayer of the five daily prayers has its own specified time, praying before that time is never permissible and after it is not permissible without a valid and legitimate excuse. But the ease and acceptance of reality within our religion approves combining between prayers (Dhuhr and Asr – Maghrib and Isha) at the time of the earlier prayer or at the time of the later prayer for some legitimate reasons including travelling as stated in the tradition of the prophet (pbuh). Other reasons for combining are rain, snow and other climate related incidents which make it difficult for people to pray at the specific prayer times.

Combining for necessity or excuse [without any rain, travel or fear] is another valid reason to remove hardship and make it easy for people. Imam Muslim narrated that Ibn Abbas said: ‘The prophet (pbuh) prayed Dhuhr and Asr in combination and Maghrib and Isha in combination without a reason for fear or travel’. In another narration: The messenger of Allah combined the Dhuhr and Asr and then Maghrib and Isha in Madinah, without there being any danger or rain. Ibn Abbas was asked: ‘What did he mean by that action?’ He replied: ‘He wanted to make it easy for this ummah’. Imam Muslim also narrated that once after the Asr prayer, Ibn Abbas addressed people till the sun set and the stars appeared, until the people said: ‘The prayer, the prayer’ and among the people there was a man belonged to Bani Tamim (tribe) who said: ‘prayer, prayer’. Then he (Ibn Abbas) became angry and said: ‘Would you teach me the Sunnah! I saw Allah’s

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messenger (pbuh) combining the Dhuhr and Asr, and Maghrib and Isha. A man said: 'I had doubt on that matter so I met Aba Huraira and questioned him and he agreed with him (Ibn Abbas)'.

Oh Muslims, it is of the miraculous nature of this religion that its general rules extend to suit new incidents that people may have never experienced before and at different times and places. For example, during summer time in some European countries time of Isha prayer can be as late as midnight or even after that while people have to go to work early next morning. This makes it very difficult for them to stay up waiting for the prayer. There is a clear hardship in that and they can avoid such hardship by relying upon the texts from Quran and what was narrated by Abdullah bin Abbas. The prophet (pbuh) once delayed the Isha prayer until midnight so people slept. He (pbuh) said: "If it wasn't for the trouble I fear for my community, I would have ordered them to pray at this time" which indicates that praying Isha at midnight or after that is actually difficult for people.

Some people might say: we do not want to combine; it is better for us to pray at home. Shaykul - Islam Ibn Taymiyah answered that by saying: 'According to the soundest view of scholars, it is permissible for a Muslim to combine prayers because of mud or strong cold wind in a dark night, even if it has stopped raining. Going to the masjid but combining prayers is more incumbent upon the muslim than performing each prayer at its due time at home. In fact, to avoid because a particular combining congregational prayers in the mosque to perform prayer at home is a matter innovated in religion (*bid'ah*) that contradicts the Sunnah (prophetic tradition). It is an act of the Sunnah to perform the five (obligatory) prayers in congregation in the mosque. According to the unanimous agreement of Muslims, it is preferable to perform prayers in masjid than at home. In addition, congregational prayer combined in the mosque is preferable to performing prayers at home individually, according to the unanimous agreement of the scholars who maintain the aforementioned permissibility to combine prayers (due to bad weather) , such as Malik , Ash-Shafi'i and Ahmad'.

Allah says: "Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favour upon you that you may be grateful" [Al-Maeidah 5:6]. All praise to Allah for his mercy, blessings and guidance.

Second khutba

A fatwa ([click here](#)) from Abdullah Bin Yusuf Al-Judai' regarding combining between Maghrib and Isha:

- 1- In the period from 12th May till 31st July, the sign for the time of Isha prayer as well as the sign of the starting time for Fajr prayer totally disappears. The last distinctive starting time for Fajr is 1:24am on the 12th of May and the last distinctive time for Isha is 12:40am. You will not find this reflected in the new calendar for this masjid from 1st of May till the 15th of August as the times were estimated by muslim league of north america.
- 2- In the period mentioned above, Isha can be prayed at any time after Maghrib till 12:40 and Fajr can be prayed after 1:24 till the 1st of August. After that, the prayer times stated on the masjid calendar should be followed.
- 3- During the period mentioned above, Isha can be combined with Maghrib. There is no objection on a short break between the two prayers for praying the optional prayer or

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remembrance. Following the estimated time stated in this calendar for prayers is allowed as the views of the scholars came with both opinions.