

Salaat & Saum

In Arctic Regions



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SALAAT AND SAUM IN 'ABNORMAL' TIME ZONES

In some regions in proximity to the North Pole, e.g. Norway, the times in relation to the rest of the world are abnormal. Some days after sunset and even before the disappearance of *shufuq abyadh* (the whitish glow in the western horizon after the redish glow), the sun rises. Thus, the time of Isha does not set in. In some regions the sun remains above the horizon for six months, and in some places it is night for six months.

The classical Fuqaha had discussed and elaborated on this issue. According to one group of Fuqaha, Isha and all other Salaat remain obligatory and have to be performed in view of the command of five Fardh Salaat daily, which is substantiated by the Sunnah.

The Sunnah has not excluded any land from this obligation. These Fuqaha base their ruling on the Hadith which says that during the era of Dajjal there will be a day the equivalent of one year. It will be a long day. The Sahaabah queried the performance of Salaat on that day. Will only five Salat be performed in that marathon day of a year? Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) explained that the times of Salaat will be calculated. That is: Five Salaat for every 24 hours.

According to the other Fuqaha, the five Salaat are conditional with their five specific times. If the incidence of a specific Salaat time does not develop in a region, then that particular Salaat is waived. They present the analogy of

Wudhu which has Four Fardh acts according to the Hanafi Math-hab. If both feet have been amputated, the fardh of washing the feet falls away. Similarly, the Fardh Salaat will be waived if its time does not develop in many regions.

Regarding the Hadith pertaining to the era of Dajjaal, these Fuqaha are of the opinion that since it is in conflict with Qiyaas (Analogical Reason), it may not be presented as a basis for a ruling. In terms of the Usool of Fiqh, the *Khilaaf-e-Qiyaas* narration shall be confined to its original purpose and not be used as a basis for extrapolation for extending the ruling to another issue.

Shaikh Akbar Muhayyuddeen Ibn Arabi (rahmatullah alayh) has elucidated this issue in his *Futuhaat*. According to him, the event of the long day during the era of Dajjaal will in reality not be one year literally. The times of Salaat will be normal. However, due to the deception of Dajjaal people will not observe the movement of the sun, sunrise and sunset. The people will perceive this day to be as long as a year.

Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) accepting this interpretation of Ibn Arabi maintained that it is erroneous to present the Hadith of a year for extrapolating a ruling for the people living in the abnormal time zones. Hadhrat Gangohi's rationale is that during the long day of Dajjaal, the times of Salaat will develop normally. However, these times will not be visible, hence the order for calculation was issued. The incongruity of this view is self-evident.

On the other hand, in places such as Norway, the time for Isha just does not develop. Hence Isha is not obligatory in such lands according to Hadhrat Gangohi (Rahmatullah alayhi).

Commenting further on this issue, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said that the actual basis for the obligation of Salaat is the Qur'anic aayat:

“Verily, Salaat has been ordained on the Mu'mineen at fixed times.”

(An-Nisaa', Aayat 103)

Therefore, if the tafseer of this Aayat is that in every 24 hours five Salaat are Fardh, then the five Salaat in every 24 hours will be Fardh on the people of Norway, etc. regardless of the time of any Salaat developing or not. On the contrary, if the tafseer of the Aayat is that five Salaat are Fardh daily at 'their fixed times', then in those lands where such fixed times do not develop, the Salaat will not be Fardh for them. This is apparent from the words of this Aayat according to Hadhrat Thanvi (Rahmatullah alayh).

Qaadhi Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alayh) has opined similarly regarding the Hadith of Dajjaal. He mentioned that the Hadith of Dajjaal pertains to a ruling issued in conflict with Qiyaas, hence it will be restricted to the era of Dajjaal. If Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had not issued the ruling of calculation, then in terms of *Ijtihaad-e-Fiqhi* the ruling would have been that in the day which is the equivalent of a year only five Salaat are obligatory, each to be performed in its stipulated time. However, in view of the explicit ruling of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam),

Qiyaas is set aside and the explicit ruling is binding, that is, for the day in the era of Dajjaal.

This conclusion in fact negates the latter view since it concedes that the day, in terms of the explicit ruling of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) will literally be the equivalent of a year, hence the need for calculation, i.e. 5 Salaat every 24 hours. This confirms that the Five Fardh Salaat are not always subservient to the time factor as applicable in what we regard as normal time zones.

It should be understood that the time, and the natural system of sunrise and sunset in countries such as Norway are not in reality 'abnormal'. This term is of relative significance. In relation to the times of other lands, the time zone of Norway is 'abnormal'. But in reality it is the normal system created by Allah Ta'ala for that region. It is quite evident that the *Ahkaam* of the Shariah are applicable to the entire earth. If there was any difference in any *Hukm* applicable to such regions, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would have received information (Wahi) from Allah Ta'ala. However, pertaining to Salaat, only one *Hukm* was issued, and that is Five Fardh Salaat per day.

Bringing Norway and similar regions within the purview of this *Hukm*, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) issued the command of 'Calculation', i.e. calculate the times for the Five daily Salaat, and perform five Salaat regardless of the stipulated times applicable to other regions. It is therefore incorrect to aver that the *Hukm* stated in the Hadith pertaining to Dajjaal is *khilaaf-e-qiyaas*. It is simply the *hukm* applicable to such regions where there is no

shufuq-e-abyadh and where the sun rises immediately after setting, and where the sun does not set for six months, etc. While this is 'abnormal' for people in other parts of the world, it is normal for the people of Norway and similar lands. Hence wherever the condition which will exist during the time of Dajjaal is found, the same hukm of 'Calculation' will apply.

Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (Rahmatullah alayh) and Hadhrat Maulana Thanvi (Rahmatullah alayh) have preferred the latter view, namely, in places such as Norway where the time for Isha' does not set in at all, the Salaat is not Fardh.

The view of Isha' not being Fardh and waived is extremely problematic to say the least. Although this view is based on valid *dalaa-il* presented by renowned authorities of the Shariah, the other view which is the view of also renowned Fuqaha, has greater credibility, and is more in consonance with the Command of Five Fardh Salaat, with Rasulullah's instruction to calculate the times, and with logic.

The simple, but vital issue, is that FIVE Salaat are Fardh daily. This is the greatest Fundamental of Islam after the Fundamental of Tauheed. Although the time factors are essential, but compared to the Salaat obligation they are of secondary importance, and this is confirmed by the Hadith of the long day during the era of Dajjaal.

Ibn Arabi's argument that no one will be able to discern the movements of the sun nor sunrise and sunset due to the

dajl (deception and fraud/magic of *Dajjaal*) for 365 days, to put it mildly, is spurious and far-fetched. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) explicitly commanded that five Salaat be performed by calculating the times, that is, five Salaat every 24 hours regardless of the stipulated times as we know. If *Dajjaal*'s *dajl* will prevent the people from discerning the movements of the sun and even sunrise and sunset, if they will be unable to distinguish between night and day, then it logically follows that only five Salaat will have to be performed on that day which in reality will not be a day the equivalent of 365 days.

However, the *zaahir* (explicit text) as well as the understanding of the Sahaabah were that the statement of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had a literal meaning, namely that the day will in reality equal to 365 days, hence the need for calculation. In the Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said in response to the question of a Sahaabi who had asked: "*How long will he (Dajjaal) be on earth?*":

"Forty days: one day like one year; one day like a month; one day like a week, and the remaining days like your (normal) days."

Then the Sahaabah asked: "*In that day of a year, will the Salaat of one day and night suffice for us?*" Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "*No! Resort to calculating (the day and night)."*

Thus, from this Hadith it is vividly clear that one day will literally be the equivalent of one year. The statement, '*the remaining days like your (normal) days*', removes any

ambiguity and confirms the literal meaning. The Hadith effectively negates the view of only five Salaats for the long day or the view of waiver of any Salaat. If the long day was merely the hallucinatory effect of Dajjaal's *dajl*, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would not have said that the 'remaining days would be like normal, that is 24 hour, days'.

On the basis of this Hadith, the one group of Fuqaha have ruled that Isha' remains Fardh despite the fact of the Isha' time not developing due to the sun rising immediately after sunset. The same ruling of Salaat being Fardh in places where the times for the other Salaats do not develop. Furthermore, despite the fact that Isha' will have to be performed after sunrise, the niyyat of Qadha should not be made.

In the Arctic islands of Svalbard, the sun remains above the horizon from April to late August. In some places during the summer months there are 24 hours of sunlight. Thus, there is no Fajr Salaat time, no Zuhr time and no Isha time. Only the Makrooh time of Asr is found. Does it now follow that the Four Fardh Salaat, Taraaweeth and Eid Salaat are all abolished in these regions? Obviously not!

Furthermore, the time for commencing Saum (fasting) and ending are also not found. Does it follow that the Fardh fasts of Ramadhaan are also abolished?

Salaat and Saum will remain Fardh in the so-called 'abnormal' time zones. The times have to be set either by spreading the five Salaats conveniently over the 24 hours, or in accordance with the nearest place where the times are normal.