116955 - There is nothing wrong with leaving the mosque after the adhaan to go and pray in another mosque

the question

It is clear in the sharee3ah that you are not allowed to leave a masjid before the salaat after the Athaan is called unless you have a valid excuse like needing to leave in order to complete you wuDoo. But is it allowed to leave after the athaan in one masjid in order to go to another masjid for the same prayer ? The other masajid may have a bigger jamaa3 or a better reciter as well as having people he wants to see after the salaat. In my case there is a small masjid that has a lesson after salaatul-maghrib up until `Ishaa time but there are other masajid that have bigger jama3s for `Ishaa some miles away in the same city and sometimes have better reciters and also have many other brothers I like seeing.

Detailed answer

It is haraam to leave the mosque after the adhaan without an excuse, because Muslim (655) narrated that Abu'l-Sha'tha' said: We were sitting in the mosque with Abu Hurayrah when the muezzin gave the adhaan. A man stood up and walked out of the mosque, and Abu Hurayrah followed him with his gaze until he exited the mosque. Abu Hurayrah said: This man has disobeyed Abu'l-Qaasim (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

It was also narrated by al-Tirmidhi, who commented: Based on this, according to the scholars among the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and those who came after them, one should not leave the mosque after the adhaan, except for one who has an excuse, such as not having wudoo or something that cannot be avoided. End quote.

Ahmad (10946) narrated it with the addition: Then he said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded us: "If you are in the mosque and the call to prayer is given, none of you should leave until he prays." Classed as saheeh by Shu'ayb al-Arna'oot in Tahqeeq al-Musnad.

Excuses which make it permissible to go out include: going out to do wudoo' if the place for doing wudoo' is outside the mosque; going out with the intention of coming back, such as if a person goes out to wake up his family, for example, then come back. This applies to going out to pray in another mosque, if he knows that he will be able to catch up with the prayer there.

It says in Ghaayat al-Muntaha: It is haraam to leave the mosque after the adhaan and before praying without an excuse or the intention of coming back. … And it is permissible to go out if one goes out after the adhaan but it is in order to pray with the congregation in another mosque, especially if its imam is better. End quote from al-Ghaayah ma'a Mataalib Ooli al-Nuha (1/304).

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in al-Fataawa (2/104): The prohibition on going out of the mosque is subject to further discussion: if there is no need for it and it serves no valid purpose, then it is haraam to go out. That is because he looks like one who is going out of the mosque without praying. But if he intends to pray in another mosque, or he has an excuse or he intends to return and there is sufficient time, then it is not haraam. End quote.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked: What is the ruling on a man doing wudoo' in one mosque then praying in another mosque?

He replied: If the place for doing wudoo' is outside the mosque, there is nothing wrong with him doing wudoo' in this place and praying in another mosque, unless the iqaamah has already been given in this mosque, in which case it is better for him to pray there. If the place for doing wudoo' is inside the mosque, then it is not permissible for him to leave the mosque after the adhaan unless it is for a reason, because Abu Hurayrah saw a man leave the mosque after the adhaan and he said: This man has disobeyed Abu'l-Qaasim (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). But if there is a reason, such as if he wants to go to another mosque to attend a lesson or for some essential purpose, then there is nothing wrong with him leaving, even if the place for doing wudoo' is inside the mosque. End quote.

He was also asked: I see some brothers sitting in the mosque for a lesson, then when the adhaan begins, they leave. I have read that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

forbade leaving the mosque when the adhaan is given. What is the ruling on that?

He replied: In al-Saheeh it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) that he saw a man leave after the adhaan and he said: This man has disobeyed Abu'l-Qaasim (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). The scholars said: It is haraam to leave the mosque after the adhaan without an excuse. But this hadeeth does not clearly state that the man went out to pray in another mosque. He may have gone out so as not to pray. What we think is that if you go out to pray in another mosque where you are sure that you will catch up with the prayer, there is nothing wrong with it, but that should not be done lest others follow that example and go out without praying.

End quote from Liqa' al-baab il-Maftooh (9/38).

Hence you will know that it is permissible for you to go out of the mosque after the adhaan in order to pray in another mosque where the imam recites better or to meet some of your brothers there, if you know that when you go there you will be able to catch up with the congregation.

And Allaah knows best.