

224032 - They refuse to offer the Eid prayer behind someone who differs from them with regard to the number of extra takbeers

the question

Are the takbeers of Eid prayer six or twelve? Because there is a big difference of opinion between the Hanafi and Salafi brothers about this matter. The Salafis say that they will never pray with the Hanafis unless they are prepared to do twelve takbeers in two rak'ahs in the Eid prayer, and it seems that the Hanafis are not prepared to do that. Hence the Eid prayer is held twice in the same place, at different times. What is the Islamic opinion concerning that? Is it possible to reach a moderate solution so that the prayer can be done one time according to the Hanafi madhhab and the other time – i.e., the second Eid – according to the Salafi way?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

This issue is one of the matters of ijtihaad concerning which the Sahaabah, Taabi'een and leading scholars differed, and there are more than ten views.

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (13/209):

The Maalikis and Hanbalis said that in Eid prayer there are six takbeers in the first rak'ah and five in the second. That was narrated from the seven fuqaha' of Madinah and from 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez, az-Zuhri and al-Muzani.

It seems that they included the opening takbeer (takbeerat al-ihram) among the seven in the first rak'ah, and they counted the takbeer of rising as extra to the five takbeers in the second rak'ah.

The Hanafis – and Ahmad, according to one report – are of the view that in the Eid prayer there are six additional takbeers, three in the first rak'ah and three in the second. This was the view of Ibn Mas'ood, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan, 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir, Ibn az-

Zubayr, Abu Mas'ood al-Badri, al-Hasan al-Basri, Muhammad ibn Sireen, ath-Thawri, and the scholars of Kufah. It was also narrated from Ibn 'Abbaas.

Ash-Shaafa'i said: The additional takbeers are seven in the first rak'ah and five in the second.

Al-'Ayni mentioned nineteen different opinions concerning the additional takbeers. End quote.

Ash-Shawkaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The scholars differed concerning the number of takbeers in the two rak'ahs of the Eid prayer and when the takbeers are to be said; there are ten different views, as follows:

1.(The imam) should say takbeer seven times in the first rak'ah before reciting, and five times in the second rak'ah before reciting.

Al-'Iraqi said: This is the view of most of the scholars among the Sahaabah, Taabi'een and imams (leading scholars).

2.The opening takbeer (takbeerat al-ihram) should be counted as one of seven takbeers in the first rak'ah. This is the view of Maalik, Ahmad and al-Muzani.

3.The number of takbeers is seven in the first rak'ah and seven in the second. This was narrated from Anas ibn Maalik, al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, Ibn 'Abbaas, Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib and an-Nakha'i.

4.In the first rak'ah there are three takbeers after the opening takbeer (takbeerat al-ihraam) and before the recitation, and in the second rak'ah there are three takbeers after the recitation. This was narrated from a number of the Sahaabah: Ibn Mas'ood, Abu Moosa, and Abu Mas'ood al-Ansaari. It is also the view of ath-Thawri and Abu Haneefah... etc. End quote from Nayl al-Awtaar (3/355)

The soundest of that which has been narrated in the Sunnah is the hadith of 'Aa'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her): The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say takbeer in the prayer on (Eid) al-Fitr and (Eid) al-Adha, seven takbeers in the first

rak'ah and five in the second. Narrated by Abu Dawood (1149); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood. This is the view of most of the scholars.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It was narrated via many good isnaads from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that in the prayer on the two Eids, he said seven takbeers in the first rak'ah and five in the second... With regard to the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), they differed greatly concerning takbeer in the Eid prayers, as did the Taabi'een.

End quote from at-Tamheed (16/37-39)

Please see the answer to question no. [36491](#).

Secondly:

The difference of opinion concerning such matters comes under the heading of acceptable differences of opinion for which the one who holds a different opinion is not to be denounced. How can he be denounced for that when it is narrated from the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), who are the imams or leaders in ijtihaad and following the Sunnah?

Hence Imam Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) was of the view that everything that was narrated from the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) concerning the additional takbeers in the Eid prayer is acceptable, and he said: The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) differed concerning the takbeers, and all their views are acceptable.

End quote from al-Furoo' (3/201)

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said, after stating that he said seven takbeers in the first rak'ah and five in the second:

But if someone does something different from that, and makes it five in both the first and the second, or seven in both the first and the second, according to what was narrated from the Sahaabah, Imam Ahmad said: The Companions of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be

upon him) differed concerning the takbeers, and all their views are acceptable. In other words, Imam Ahmad thought that the matter was broad in scope, and that if a person did these takbeers in a different manner, according to something that was narrated from the Sahaabah, then there is nothing wrong with it.

This is the view of Imam Ahmad himself – he thought that if the early generations differed concerning something, and there was no decisive text concerning it, then all views were acceptable, because he respected and venerated the views of the Sahaabah. He said: If there is no decisive text that could rule out one of the views, then the matter is broad in scope.

Undoubtedly this view of Imam Ahmad is one of the best ways of bringing the ummah together and uniting them, because some people take differences of opinion regarding matters concerning which ijtihaad and reaching different conclusions is acceptable as a reason for division and dissent, to the extent that they will regard their brethren for being misguided with regard to a matter concerning which they themselves may be the ones who are misguided. This is part of the problem that has become widespread nowadays, despite what there is nowadays of grounds for optimism with regard to this awakening among the youth in particular. This awakening may be spoiled and go back to deep sleep as a result of of this division, because each one of them, if his brother disagrees with him concerning the matter that is subject to ijtihaad and concerning which there is no definitive text, he is put off and he begins to revile him and speak negatively about him. This is a test which brings joy to the enemies of this awakening.

If the matter is subject to ijtihaad, then each of us should make allowances for his brother with regard to the matter concerning which he engaged in ijtihaad.

There is nothing wrong with calm and useful discussion among brothers.

And I say: May Allah reward Imam Ahmad with good for this good approach, because if the early generations differed concerning a matter and there was no definitive text, then the matter is broad in scope and all views as acceptable.

End quote from ash-Sharh al-Mumti‘ (5/135-138)

Thus it becomes clear that there is nothing wrong with someone doing that which was narrated from the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), even though what is preferable is to say seven takbeers in the first rak'ah and five in the second.

Thirdly:

What we should do is strive to bring people together and create harmony between them, because this is one of the fundamentals of Islam. It is not permissible to demolish this principle because of a matter that is Sunnah or mustahabb, in the case of which there is no blame or sin on a person if he does not do it. Yes, there is no reason why we should not discuss, research and debate in a calm manner in order to find out the strongest view and the one that is closest to the Sunnah. But if that agreement does not come about, and each side thinks that it is closest to the Sunnah, and they are following those who reached that view before them, among the Sahaabah, Taabi'een and imams (leading scholars), then what must be done in that case is for all the Muslims in the city to unite behind one imam, and offer one prayer, and not be divided, because division in that case comes from the Shaytaan and causes their enemies to rejoice.

In fatwa no. [12585](#) we stated that if the imam does something in the prayer that the person who is praying behind him does not think is Islamically acceptable, then what he must do is follow the imam so long as the matter is something that is subject to ijtihaad. What would these people do if they were to pray behind the senior Sahaabah, such as 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari or Abu Mas'ood al-Badri? They used to say takbeer three times in the first rak'ah and three times in the second.

Would they refuse to pray behind these prominent imams? They are imams of the ummah, among the most well-versed in knowledge and the most righteous at heart!

Conclusion: differences of opinion concerning the number of additional takbeers in the Eid prayer do not make it permissible for the Muslims to become divided and establish another prayer, because having two Eid prayers, with each congregation praying by itself, is a reprehensible innovation that causes division among the Muslims, as is quite obvious to any

rational person. It is not possible that there should be any Islamic teaching or Sunnah that promotes such a thing.

So it is not permissible to say: we will pray one time in the Salafi manner and another time in the Hanafi manner. Rather the entire community is enjoined to pray in one manner, which is the way of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and his Companions. This is the way of the imams (leading scholars) of the ummah, such as Abu Haneefah, Maalik, ash-Shaafa'i, Ahmad, and others. With regard to matters concerning which the Sahaabah and scholars differed and in which it is permissible to disagree, we should be easy going and open-minded regarding these differences of opinion.

We ask Allah, may He be exalted, to unite the Muslims in following the truth and to create harmony between their hearts.

And Allah knows best