233872 - What should we do if a lunar eclipse coincides with Fajr prayer?

the question

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Detailed answer

The lunar eclipse is expected, by Allah's will, to occur at 04:07 a.m. in Saudi Arabia. The moon will appear large because it will be at its closest point to the earth.

It will be a total eclipse because the sun, earth and moon will be completely aligned, and the earth will block the light of the sun from the moon, except a little, with the result that the moon will appear copper coloured.

The question now is what should we do with regard to the eclipse prayer and Fajr prayer, when they coincide tomorrow in some places, by Allah's will?

There follows the answer of our Shaykh 'Abd ar-Rahmaan al-Barraak (may Allah preserve him):

If the eclipse appears clearly before the time for the iqaamah of Fajr prayer, with sufficient time to perform a brief eclipse prayer, such as a quarter of an hour and the like, then we should offer the eclipse prayer first.

But if the eclipse prayer will leave no time for the obligatory prayer, and will lead to delaying it greatly, then we should offer the obligatory prayer first, then offer the eclipse prayer, if the eclipse is still ongoing . End quote.

There may be some confusion among some of those who come to the mosque to pray Fajr and find the people offering the eclipse prayer, and join them. What is the ruling on a person's prayer in that case?

One thing that will help to prevent confusion is to give the call for the eclipse prayer by saying "As-salaatu jaami'ah (prayer is about to begin)", whether we offer this prayer after the adhaan

of Fajr and before the obligatory prayer, or we do so after the obligatory prayer.

If that happens in the case of any worshipper, then when he realises he should change his intention from offering the obligatory prayer to offering the eclipse prayer that he joined with the imam, especially as the difference between them is clear.

The eclipse prayer is two rak'ahs, but in each rak'ah there are two standings, two recitations, two bowings, and two prostrations, so the way it is done is very different from the two-rak'ah prayer of Fajr.

If it so happens that someone mistakenly offers the obligatory prayer behind an imam who is offering the eclipse prayer, then his prayer is not valid as an obligatory prayer, and he must repeat it, because of the clear difference between the two in their actions.

With regard to the question of the eclipse prayer and Fajr, and whether the moon has already set or not, Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

If the moon is eclipsed after the break of dawn, then the apparent meaning of the specific evidence, as mentioned above, indicates that it is prescribed to offer the eclipse prayer, because it has not set completely.

Therefore it is prescribed to offer the eclipse prayer, because of the general meaning of the hadiths, but if anyone does not do it, there is no blame on him, according to the second opinion, and because the moon's time is at night, when it is fully visible, and the night has ended.

If a person does the eclipse prayer for a lunar eclipse after Fajr, then it is better to hasten to do that before Fajr prayer. The same applies if the eclipse occurs at the end of the night, and he does not come to know of it until after dawn has broken.

Therefore it is prescribed to begin with the eclipse prayer, then offer Fajr prayer after that, taking care to keep the eclipse prayer brief so that it will be possible to offer Fajr prayer on time.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said, concerning the issue of when dawn has broken and the lunar eclipse and the prayer come at a time when prayer is normally

disallowed:

I think that if the eclipse appears at a time when the light of the moon remains, the eclipse prayer should be done, but if that occurs after the light of dawn has spread and the light of the moon is has faded, then the eclipse prayer should not be done. And Allah knows best.

Note: there are saheeh hadiths which indicate that it is permissible to use the Arabic words kusoof and khusoof to refer to both solar and lunar eclipses, but some of them used the word kusoof to refer to a solar eclipse, and khusoof to refer to a lunar eclipse.