

33582 - Should You Stop Sunnah Prayer When Iqamah Is Announced?

the question

Suppose I am praying Sunnah and the iqamah is being announced. Should I perform the salutation and join Salatul Fard or should I continue?

Summary of answer

If the Iqamah for prayer is given while you are still in the first Rak`ah of an optional prayer, then you should cut it short. If that happens when you are in the second Rak`ah, then you should complete it quickly and not cut it short.

Detailed answer

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Understanding the Hadith on Praying Optional Prayer during Iqamah

Muslim (710) narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “When the Iqamah for prayer is given, there is no prayer except the prescribed prayer.”

This Hadith indicates that [once the Iqamah has been given for prayer](#), then no one should start to offer an [optional prayer](#).

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “When the Iqamah for prayer is given, do not be distracted from it by optional prayer, whether one fears missing the first Rak`ah or not. This is the view of Abu Hurayrah, Ibn `Umar, `Urwah, Ibn Sirin, Sa`id ibn Jubayr, Ash-Shafi`i, Is-haq and Abu Thawr.” (End quote from Al-Mughni, 1/272)

Scholarly Opinions on Ending Optional Prayer during Iqamah

Some of the scholars also quoted this Hadith as evidence that the person who is offering an optional prayer when the Iqamah is given should cut short that prayer.

Al-Hafidh Al-`Iraqi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “His words ‘there is no prayer’ may be interpreted as meaning that he should not start an optional prayer in that case; or it may be interpreted as meaning that he should not be distracted by an optional prayer, and if he had started it before the Iqamah then he should cut it short so that he can catch up with the opening Takbir [with the Imam], or that it is invalid in and of itself even if the worshipper does not cut it short. It may be understood as meaning both of these.”

It was narrated from Shaykh Abu Hamid, one of the Shafi`is, that it is better to stop the optional prayer if completing means that he is going to miss the opening Takbir with the imam. (The words of Al-`Iraqi were quoted by Ash-Shawkani in Nayl Al-Awtar, 3/91)

This was also stated in a Fatwa issued by the Standing Committee, when they were asked:

Is it permissible to cut short an optional prayer and join the opening Takbir with the imam, or should one complete the optional prayer?

They replied:

Yes, if the Iqamah for an obligatory prayer is given, then you should cut short your optional prayer so that you can join the opening Takbir with the imam, because it was proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If the Iqamah for prayer is given, then there is no prayer but the prescribed prayer.” (End quote from Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da’imah, 7/312)

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said that the correct view is that if the Iqamah for prayer is given whilst the person is still in the first Rak`ah of an optional prayer, then he should cut it short; if that happens when he is in the second Rak`ah then he should complete it quickly and not cut it short.

He said (may Allah have mercy on him):

What we think concerning this matter is that if you are in the second Rak`ah, then you should complete it quickly, but if you are in the first Rak`ah, then you should cut it short. Our evidence for that is the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “Whoever catches up with one Rak`ah of the prayer has caught up with the prayer” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 580 and Muslim, 607).

So the person who has prayed a Rak`ah before the Iqamah for prayer is given has caught up with a Rak`ah that is free of any impediments, which here means the Iqamah for prayer, so he has caught up with the prayer by doing a Rak`ah before the prayer becomes disallowed, so he should complete it quickly... Then he said: This is the view that reconciles all the evidence. (End quote from Ash-Sharh Al-Mumti`, 4/238)

How to Conclude Optional Prayer If Iqamah Begins

If he cuts short the optional prayer he should do so without saying the Taslim.

The Standing Committee was asked (7/312): If the Iqamah for prayer is given and there is a person who is doing two Rak`ahs of Sunnah prayer or “Greeting the Mosque”, should he cut short his prayer so that he can offer the obligatory prayer with the congregation? If the answer is yes, then should he say the Taslim when cutting short his prayer, or should he cut it short without the Taslim?

They replied:

The more correct of the two scholarly views is that he should cut short that prayer, and there is no need to say the Taslim when doing so. Then he should join the Imam.

For more details, please see the following answers:

[Is praying two Rak`ahs between the Adhan and Iqamah recommended for women as well as for men?](#)

[At what point should one stand up when hearing the Iqamah?](#)

Is there a set time for the Iqamah (call immediately before the prayer)?

And Allah knows best.