

Performing 'Eed prayer in school

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Article taken and slightly adapted from: ferkous.com

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: Is it permissible to offer 'Eed prayer near a mosque in a school where men pray, and in another school where women pray; these two schools are separated with a public road? The mosque will stay, then, empty out of belief that it is better, as the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) used to offer 'Eed prayer in Al-Mussalla (open praying place)? Then, would prayer be, in this case, valid, knowing that the rows are separated with a public road?

Shaykh Aboo `Abd-al-Mu`iz `Alee Farkous al-Qoobee (*May Allaah the Most High preserve him*): All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allaah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

As a rule, it is permissible for a person to follow his Imaam [in prayer], even if there is a separation between them, on condition that the person should know the movements of the Imaam by seeing or hearing him. This principle is supported by the act of Aboo Hurairah (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him*) who prayed on the [roof of the] mosque and followed his Imaam. It is also supported by the act of Anas Ibn Maalik (*May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him*) who used to offer the Friday prayer in the house of Aboo Naafi` on the right of the mosque, following his Imaam, knowing that the Companions did not say anything about his act¹. However, one should resort to that act just when he is in need or having an excuse, in order to reconcile between this act and the Prophet's order to establish the rows [in prayer] directly one after the other and to fill the empty spaces, which is stated in many authentic hadeeths mentioned in this context.

Among the excuses that may oblige the person to resort to the [said] act of the Companions, when the mosque is full and when there is too much crowd.

Otherwise, one should not observe prayer [outside] if the mosque is not full; for this reason, Hishaam and his father `Urwa prayed in a house near a mosque which was full of people.

¹ See, "Nayl al-Awtaar" of Ash-Shawkanee (4/104).

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They followed the Imaam, knowing that the house and the mosque were separated with a way².

- In this context, Shaykh al-Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah said, "If the mosque is full of rows, they (the Muslims) should make other rows outside the mosque. If the rows, then, are made directly one after the other, whether in the ways or markets, their prayer is valid. However, if they make the rows and there is between them a way used by people, their prayer is invalid according to the most correct opinion of the two said by the scholars. Also, if there is between them a wall that prevent them from seeing the other rows, even if they listen to the Takbeer (saying Allaahu Akbar in prayer), their prayer is invalid according to the most correct opinion of the two said by the scholars if there is no need [to pray behind the wall]. Also, the same thing applies on the person who prays in his shop while the way is empty, his prayer is invalid. He should not wait until the rows reach his shop. He should rather go to the mosque and complete the last row"³.

I say: if adhering to the rows directly one after the other and completing the spaces in the rows were not obligatory, except for an excuse, praying following the radio and television would be valid. In fact, this is in contradiction of the religious fatwa.

As for the place where the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) used to carry out 'Eed prayer, it is indeed in Al-Mussalla⁴, which means desert, or open space outside the city and near to it according to the usage.

And it is never reported that the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) offered it in the mosque. According to the Sunnah, the overwhelming majority of scholars say that 'Eed prayer should be performed in Al-Mussalla, but not in the mosque, except for necessity or excuse. Also, Makkah makes an exception, where it is preferred to offer 'Eed prayer in the Holy mosque, thanks to the honour of that place; contrarily to the Shaafi'ee scholars who say that if the mosque is not spacious, it is better to offer it in Al-Mussalla; and if the mosque is spacious, it is better to offer it in the mosque.

You know now that the scholars disagreed only on the preference of offering prayer in the two said places. However, performing 'Eed prayer in a school is not included in the two previously mentioned places, because – as I know – the word Al-Mussalla, in usage, does not qualify the yard of the school. Consequently, the prayer, in this regard, is detestable, as it is not carried out rightly, religiously speaking. Moreover, it might be invalid, due to the

² See, "Al-Mussannaf" of `Abd Ar-Razzaaq (3/82).

³ See, "Majmoo` al-Fataawaa" (23/410).

⁴ Shaykh al-Albaanee has a book concerning the recommendation of the 'Eed prayer in Al-Mussalla. So, revise it.

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fact of abandoning the mosque and leading the praying persons out of it to move to the two schools near it; in addition to the interruption of the rows of prayer by the public road.

For this reason, the 'Eed prayer should be performed, if possible, in Al-Mussalla, because the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*) did so. If it is not possible, they can offer it in the mosque. If the mosque cannot accommodate them, and the rows reach the outside, let them complete the rows one after another, even if they reach the two schools or go beyond; the prayer then is undoubtedly valid.

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allaah (*Mighty and Majestic is He*). Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet, his Family, his Companions and Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.