

Offering Two Prayers At One Time

There was no disagreement among all the Islamic sects about the permissibility of offering Dhuhr prayer and Assr prayer at one time in Arafa.¹ It was called antecedence.² The same was said about offering Maghrib and Isha' prayers at one time in Muzdalifa.³ This was called delaying.⁴ In fact there was no any disagreement about preferring offering each two prayers together and considering that as a part of the Prophet's Sunna but the Muslims disagreed upon offering two prayers together in other than these two cases.

The point of the dispute was about the permissibility of offering two prayers (whether Dhuhr and Assr or Maghrib and Isha') in the time of one of them like anteceding one of them as had been done in Arafa or delaying one as had been done in Muzdalifa.

The infallible imams of the Prophet's progeny had declared clearly that it was permissible (to offer two prayers together) at all but offering each one in its certain time would be better. The Shia followed their imams in this concern in every age and in every side of the earth. They often offered Dhuhr prayer and Assr prayer at one time and Maghrib and Isha' at one time whether they were in travel or not and whether there was an excuse for that or not. It was not different for them whether anteceding one of the first two prayers or delaying one of the other two prayers.

The Hanafites⁵ prohibited offering two prayers at one time at all except in Arafa and Muzdalifa in spite of that their Sihah⁶ had true traditions confirming the permissibility of that but they interpreted them according to their own thoughts. We will show you the invalidity of their thoughts later on inshallah.

As for the Shafi'is, the Malikites and the Hanbalites,⁷ they permitted that in travel with some disagreements among them in case when there were no excuses like raining, mud, illness or fear. Also they were in dispute about the conditions of travel that might permit to offer two prayers together.⁸

Our evidence, according which we worshipped Allah in this matter, was the true traditions of our infallible imams (s). But we might argue with the Sunni sects according to their own Sihah, in which many traditions were mentioned talking about the permissibility of offering two prayers at one time.

Muslim⁹ said in his *Sahih*:

a. Yahya bin Yahya told us from Malik from Abuz Zubayr from Sa'eed bin Jubayr that ibn Abbas had said: "The Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers together (at one time)¹⁰ and offered Maghrib and Isha' prayers together where there was no fear nor was he on travel."

b. Abu Bakr bin Abu Shayba narrated from Sufyan bin Oyayna from Amr bin Dinar from Abush Sha'tha' Jabir bin Zayd that ibn Abbas had said: "I offered prayers with the Prophet (s) eight times, in which he offered each two prayers at one time. I think he delayed Dhuhr prayer and preceded Assr prayer and delayed Maghrib prayer and preceded Isha' prayer." Muslim said: "I think so too."¹¹

c. Abur Rabee' az-Zahrani narrated from Hammad bin Zayd from Amr bin Dinar from Jabir bin Zayd that ibn Abbas had said: "The Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers together and Maghrib and Isha' together seven or eight times in Medina."

d. Abur Rabee' az-Zahrani narrated from Hammad from az-Zubayr from bin al-Khareet that Abdullah bin Shaqeeq had said: "One day Abdullah bin Abbas made a speech after the Assr prayer until the sun set and the stars appeared in the sky. People began to cry: The prayer! The prayer! Then a man of Tameem,¹² who was so bold and who wouldn't abate nor would he give up, came to ibn Abbas saying: "The prayer! The prayer!" Ibn Abbas said to him: "Do you teach me the Sunna?!" Then he added: "I have seen the Prophet (s) offering Dhuhr and Assr prayers at one time and offering Maghrib and Isha' prayers at one time." Abdullah bin Shaqeeq said: "I doubted about that. I went to Abu Hurayra and asked him. He confirmed the saying of ibn Abbas."¹³

e. Ibn Abu Omayr narrated from Wakee' from Imran bin Hadeer that Abdullah bin Shaqeeq al-Aqeeli had said: "A man said to ibn Abbas: The prayer! Ibn Abbas kept silent. Then the man said: The prayer! He kept silent. Then he said: The prayer! Ibn Abbas said: "Do you teach us the prayer?! We often offered the prayers together at the time of the Prophet (s)."

An-Nassa'iy mentioned a tradition narrated by Amr bin Harm from Abush Sha'tha' that ibn Abbas offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers with no period of time separating between them because of business. He justified that by referring to the Prophet (s).¹⁴

f. Ahmed bin Yunus and Oun bin Salam narrated from Zuhayr from Abuz-Zubayr from Sa'eed bin Jubayr that ibn Abbas had said: "The Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers at one time in Medina without fear or travel."¹⁵ Abuz Zubayr said: "I asked Sa'eed why the Prophet (s) did so. He said: I asked ibn Abbas the same question and he said: the Prophet (s) did so in order not to embarrass any one of his umma."¹⁶

g. Abu Bakr bin Abu Shayba and Abu Kurayb narrated from Abu Mo'awiya and Abu Kurayb and Abu Sa'eed al-Ashajj narrated from Wakee' and Abu Mo'awiya from al-A'mash from Habeeb bin Abu Thabit from Sa'eed bin Jubayr that ibn Abbas had said: "The Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers at one

time and offered Maghrib and Isha' prayers at one time in Medina where there was no fear or rain."
...Wakee' asked Ibn Abbas why did the Prophet (s) do so and ibn Abbas said: "...in order not to embarrass his umma." In the tradition of Abu Mo'awiya also it was said to ibn Abbas: What did the Prophet (s) want by doing so? Ibn Abbas said: He (the Prophet (s)) wanted not to embarrass his umma."

h. Yahya bin Habeeb al-Harithi narrated from Khalid bin al-Harth from Qurra bin Khalid from Abuz Zubayr from Sa'eed bin Jubayr that ibn Abbas had said: "The Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers at the same time and offered Maghrib and Isha' at the same time on his travel during the battle of Tabook." Sa'eed said: "I asked ibn Abbas that what led the Prophet (s) to do that. He said: he wanted not to embarrass his umma."

i. Yahya bin Habeeb narrated from Khalid bin al-Harth from Qurra bin Khalid from Abuz Zubayr from Aamir bin Wa'ila Abut Tufayl that Mu'ath bin Jabal had said: "During the battle of Tabook the Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers together and offered Maghrib and Isha' prayers together. I asked what led him to do that. It was said that he didn't want to embarrass his umma."

These true traditions mentioned in the Sihah were clear in showing the reason behind the legislation of offering two prayers at one time. It was to let people have some ease in offering the prayers and not to be burdened with them because separation between the prayers—offering each one in its certain time—might be somehow difficult for the most of people, who would be busy with their works and affairs of living. The last two traditions were not restricted to travel or other excuses like illness, raining, fear or others as they were by themselves but they referred to generality that the permissibility of offering two prayers at one time was absolute and not limited to special cases. Therefore you found that Imam Muslim didn't mention these traditions under the chapter of "offering the prayers together where there was no travel" to be as evidences for the absolute permissibility of that and this showed his prudence, knowledge and fairness.

The traditions mentioned by Muslim were according to the conditions depended by al-Bukhari in deciding the truthfulness of traditions and the narrators also were depended upon by al-Bukhari so what made him (al-Bukhari) not mention all the traditions talking about the subject? What led him to be satisfied with a few of them? And why didn't he assign a certain chapter about the true traditions talking about offering prayers at one time whether in travel or not although that most imams of the different sects had acknowledged the permissibility of offering two prayers at one time? And why did he choose the weakest traditions in proving the subject? I don't think that al-Bukhari was one of those, who changed the words from their (right) places and concealed the truth which they themselves knew well!

Here is what he has chosen of traditions in his *Sahih* talking about this subject:

a. Abun Nu'man narrated from Hammad bin Zayd from Amr bin Dinar from Jabir bin Zayd that ibn Abbas had said: "The Prophet (s) offered Dhuhr and Assr prayers in the same time and offered Maghrib and Isha' prayers in the same time in Medina seven or eight times." Ayyoub said: "Perhaps it was in a rainy

night.” He said: “Perhaps!”

(*They follow but conjecture*) as Allah says!

b. Adam narrated from Shu’ba from Amr bin Dinar from Jabir bin Zayd that ibn Abbas had said: “The Prophet (s) offered prayers together seven or eight time.”

c. From ibn Omar, Abu Ayyoub and ibn Abbas that the Prophet (s) offered Maghrib and Isha’ prayers (together) in the time of one of them rather than the other.

Mentioning this very few traditions from among much many true traditions evidencing the subject was enough to confirm what we said about al-Bukhari.

Also it was confirmed by the saying of ibn Mass’ood: “The Prophet (s) offered—in Medina—Dhuhr and Assr prayers together and offered Maghrib and Isha’ prayers together. He was asked about that and he said: I did so lest my umma would be embarrassed.” It was mentioned by at-Tabarani. [17](#)

It was mentioned that Abdullah bin Omar was asked: “Why did the Prophet (s) offer Dhuhr and Assr prayers together and Maghrib and Isha’ prayers together in Medina where he was not on travel?” He said: “He did so in order that his umma not to be embarrassed.” [18](#)

Anyhow all the Sunni jurisprudents acknowledged the permissibility of offering the prayers in one time and they were certain that these traditions were true in evidencing this matter.

You can refer to whatever you like of their comments on these traditions talking about the permissibility of offering two prayers in one time. [19](#)

Yes! They interpreted the tradition according to the doctrines of their sects; therefore they became in a dark confusion.

The comment of an-Nawawi on these traditions mentioned in his book *Sharh Sahih Muslim* was enough to show you the truth. He said, after considering the traditions as clear evidence confirming the permissibility of offering the prayers together in residence: “The ulema had different interpretations and thoughts. Some of them justified that by saying that the Prophet (s) had offered the prayers together because of the rain.

This was the thought of some of the first great personalities. [20](#) But this was a weak justification according to the second tradition of ibn Abbas when saying (...without fear or rain). Some of them pretended that the sky was cloudy so the Prophet (s) offered the Dhuhr prayer but when the clouds dispelled, it appeared that it was the time of Assr prayer then the Prophet (s) offered the Assr prayer. [21](#) This was also vain because if it was possible for Dhuhr and Assr prayers, it wouldn’t be possible for Maghrib and Isha’ prayers.

Some of them pretended that the Prophet (s) had delayed the first prayer (Dhuhr) until the end of its time and so when he had finished offering it, the time of the Assr prayer came and then he offered it; therefore his gathering the two prayers was just formal.²² This was weak and vain too because it contradicted the meaning of the tradition so clearly. The doing of ibn Abbas when he made his speech and the people cried: the prayer, the prayer, but he didn't pay any attention to them and he justified his delaying the Maghrib prayer until the time of the Isha' prayer and then Abu Hurayra confirmed that and didn't deny it when he was asked; all that refuted the above interpretation."

Ibn Abdul Birr, al-Khitabi and others denied this interpretation too. They said that offering prayers together was a kind of authorization and if it was formal, it would be so difficult to offer each prayer in its time because the beginnings and the ends of prayers' times couldn't be perceived by most of the scholars so how about the ordinary people! They said that ibn Abbas' saying (...he wanted not to embarrass his umma) was clear evidence proving the authorization of offering prayers together. Offering prayers together, which was cleared by the true traditions, was either by preceding the second prayer to be offered with the first one or by delaying the first prayer to be offered with the second one. They said that it was this meaning, which was understood from the wording of these traditions. This was the very point of the dispute.

An-Nawawi said: "... and some of them interpreted the traditions as if offering prayers together was because of illness or something like that. This was the thought of Ahmed bin Hanbal and the judge Husayn and it was adopted by our companions; al-Khitabi, al-Mutawalli and ar-Rawyani. This was the apparent meaning according to the wording of the traditions."

No evidence in the traditions showing what they said. Saying so was but fabrication as al-Qastalani had said in his book *Sharh Sahih* al-Bukhari.²³

Some of the scholars criticized him (an-Nawawi) too by saying: "It was said that offering prayers together was because of illness. An-Nawawi confirmed this saying. But this justification was not correct because if the Prophet (s) had offered the prayers together because of illness, then no one would have offered prayers with him except those who were ill, whereas the Prophet (s) had offered the prayers with a group of his companions as it had been narrated by ibn Abbas in a true tradition."²⁴

Since there was no interpretation accepted by the ulema about the traditions talking about offering the prayers together, so some of the Sunnis adopted the thought of the Shia about the matter unknowingly. An-Nawawi mentioned them after he had refuted their false interpretations. He said: "Some of the scholars permitted offering prayers together in residence (in one's place of living-not being in travel) if it was necessary for those, who would not take it as a habit. This was the thought of ibn Seereen and Ashhab, who were Malik's companions. So was the thought of al-Qaffaal ash-Shashi *al-Kabeer*, who was one of ash-Shafi'iy's companions as it was said by al-Khitabi. The same was thought by Abu Iss-haq al-Mirwizi and some of the scholars of Hadith. Ibnul Munthir acknowledged this thought when he said: "The saying of ibn Abbas confirmed this thought when he said that the Prophet (s) didn't want to

embarrass his umma where he didn't justify it by illness or anything else. Allah is the most aware!" This was his own saying.^{[25](#)} Some others of the Sunni scholars^{[26](#)} had said the same."

Some of the Sunni researchers in our time might adopt our thought, as I was told by more than one of them, but they didn't dare to inform the public of that or ihtiyat (precaution) might prevent them from that because separating the prayers (offering each one in its certain time) would be better than offering them together but an important thing escaped them that separating prayers led many people, who would be busy with their jobs during the time of prayers, to give up offering the prayers whereas offering prayers together would be more possible to make them keep to their prayers. Hence the jurisprudents would better give a fatwa to permit the public to offer the prayers together in order to make it easy for them and not difficult. (**Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty** 2:185), (**...and He has not laid upon you any hardship in religion** 22:78).

The evidence of offering the prayer together absolutely is clear according to the holy Quran and the Sunna. The Quran has declared that the times of obligatory prayers are three only; a common time for Dhuhr and Assr prayers, a common time for Maghrib and Isha' prayers and a third time for the Fajr (dawn) prayer. Allah says: (**Keep up prayer from the declining of the sun till the darkness of the night and the morning recitation; surely the morning recitation is witnessed.** 17:78)

Imam ar-Razi said when interpreting this verse in his *Tafseer*:^{[27](#)} "If we interpret ghasaq^{[28](#)} (dusk) as the beginning of darkness in the sunset, so according to this account mentioned in the verse, the times of prayers are three; the time when the sun declines, the beginning of the sunset and the time of the dawn. This requires that the time when the sun declines, is to be a common time between Dhuhr and Assr prayers, the beginning of the sunset is to be a common time between Maghrib and Isha' prayers. This determines the permissibility of offering the prayers together absolutely.^{[29](#)} But the evidence shows that offering prayers together in residence without an excuse is not permissible so it becomes obligatory for offering prayers together that there must be an excuse like travel, raining or other things."

We strove in researching for what he had said that offering prayers together in residence without an excuse wouldn't be permissible but we, by Allah, couldn't find anything leading to it. Yes, the Prophet (s) offered prayers together when there was an excuse but he also offered prayers together when there was no any excuse for that lest he would embarrass his umma. We had no any objection that offering each prayer in its certain time would be better; therefore the Prophet (s) had preferred it except when there was an excuse as he used to do with mustahabs.^{[30](#)}

^{[1](#)}. Dhuhr means noon and Assr means afternoon. Arafa is a place near Mecca visited by the pilgrims during the hajj.

^{[2](#)}. It means offering Assr prayer before its time by offering it within the time of Dhuhr prayer but it must not be offered before Dhuhr prayer.

^{[3](#)}. Maghrib means sunset (time of sunset) and Isha' means evening. Muzdalifa is place in Mecca visited by the pilgrims during the hajj.

^{[4](#)}. It means delaying Maghrib prayer until the time of Isha' prayer to be offered together.

^{[5](#)}. The Hanafite was one of the main four Sunni sects.

6. Sihah are the books of Hadith.
7. Shafi'i's, Malikites and Hanbalites are the main Sunni sects besides the Hanafites.
8. Some of them said that only the religious travel like the hajj, the minor hajj and the sacred war permitted offering the prayers at one time and some said that it was permissible except in the travel of disobedience (when traveling to commit sins) while some put certain conditions about special kinds of travels and others didn't put any condition by saying that any kind of travel might permit offering the prayers at one time. All that was detailed in the books of their jurisprudence.
9. Muslim was one of the main persons, who had collected the prophetic traditions in books called Sihah (Sahih is the singular form). He was highly trusted by the Sunni sects.
10. You know well that they mean by offering two prayers at one time that is to offer them at the time of one of them whether by anteceding the Assr prayer to be offered with the Dhuhr prayer or delaying the Maghrib prayer to be offered with the Isha' prayer. This was their purpose of this saying since the age of the companions until nowadays and this was the point of the dispute as it was mentioned before.
11. This tradition was mentioned by Ahmed bin Hanbal in his Musnad vol. 1 p.221 and in the same page there was a tradition narrated by ibn Abbas saying: "The Prophet (s) offered prayers together seven or eight times while he was in Medina and not on travel."
12. Tameem was a name of a tribe.
13. How this world was so insignificant near Allah and how people were indifferent to the Prophet's family that they doubted about ibn Abbas then to go to Abu Hurayra to be certain about the truth!! This tradition was also mentioned by Ahmed bin Hanbal in his Musnad vol. 1 p.251.
14. It was also mentioned by az-Zarqani in his Sharh al-Muwatta' vol. 1 p.263.
15. Also it was mentioned by Malik in his Muwatta' and by Ahmed in his Musnad.
16. He didn't want to burden his umma with the obligations that perhaps someone couldn't find enough time to offer each prayer in its certain time because of the different affairs of living.
17. Refer to Sharh al-Muwatta' by az-Zarqani, vol. 1 p.263.
18. Kanzul Ommal, vol. 4 p.242.
19. Refer to an-Nawawi's book Sharh Sahih Muslim, az-Zarqani's Sharh Muwatta' Malik, al-Asqalani, al-Qastalani and Zakariyya al-Ansari in their books when explaining al-Bukhari's Sahih and refer to everyone commenting on the books of Hadith that included the tradition of ibn Abbas talking about the matter of offering two prayers in one time. They considered the tradition as true and they became certain about the possibility of offering the prayers together in residence (not in travel) just not to embarrass the umma. I don't know, by Allah, what made them turn away from this possibility! It might be because of their situation towards Ahlul Bayt (the Prophet's progeny)!
20. Like Imam Malik, ash-Shafi'iy and some people of Medina.
21. This is just guess, falseness and divination.
22. Abu Haneefa and his companions interpreted all these traditions of gathering the prayers together to be formal gathering and so they prohibited offering two prayers together at all and this was very odd of them. We didn't need to argue with them because many ulema had refuted their thought.
23. Refer to Irshad as-Sari fee Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari by al-Qastalani, vol. 2 p.293. The author said: "Some of them interpreted ibn Abbas' tradition to mean that offering prayers together was because of illness and an-Nawawi confirmed this interpretation but he was criticized of being contradicting the apparent meaning of the tradition and that his limiting the tradition to this reason was unjustified."
24. Refer to Sharh Muwatta' Malik by az-Zarqani, vol. 1 p.263.
25. Sharh Sahih Muslim, vol. 4 p.455.
26. Like az-Zarqani in his book Sharh Muwatta' Malik and everyone, who had commented on the tradition of ibn Abbas talking about offering prayers together like al-Asqalani, al-Qastalani and others.
27. Vol. 5 p.428.
28. The Arabic word mentioned in the Quranic verse.
29. But if we interpreted ghasaq as the utmost darkness of the midnight-as it was narrated from Imam Sadiq (s)-then the time of the four prayers; Dhuhr, Assr, Maghrib and Isha' would begin from the declining of the sun until midnight. Dhuhr and

Assr prayers participated in the time since the declining of the sun until the sunset but Dhuhr prayer must be offered before Assr prayer and Maghrib and Isha' prayers participated in the time since the sunset until midnight but the Maghrib prayer must be offered before the Isha' prayer. As for the Fajr prayer, Allah had assigned its time by saying: (...and the morning recitation; surely the morning recitation is witnessed).

[30.](#) Mustahab: A voluntary and meritorious act of worship.

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