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Question: Why do we sometimes recite the Noon Prayers prayer at the earliest hour and then immediately perform the Afternoon Prayers prayer? While it is not the time of Afternoon Prayers? And in the same way sometimes we pray the Noon Prayers prayer at the last moments while its time has already passed?

Answer: Basically we should remember that Noon Prayers and Afternoon Prayers prayer time and in the same way the Evening and Night prayer time denote that in those times no other prayer is permitted.

For example from the beginning of the time of Noon Prayers till when time remains only to perform four rakats (units) of prayer is the time of Noon Prayers prayer and before the sunset the time for four rakats is restricted for Afternoon Prayers prayer. And the time between the two is common time for Noon Prayers and Afternoon Prayers.

We shall also remember that of the two prayers each of them has the best time (Waq̄t-e-Fazilat) and if they are performed during this time its reward is more.

For example the best time of Noon Prayers is from the beginning of Noon Prayers till the shade of a pole is equal to it. At this moment the best time ends and the time of Afternoon Prayers begins. On the basis of this the prayers are named Noon Prayers and Afternoon Prayers due to their best times and not due to the common time when both these prayers could be performed.

One who prays the Afternoon Prayers prayer at the beginning part of Noon Prayers, he has performed his prayer in the correct time and when he makes an intention to perform the Afternoon Prayers prayer he means that he is praying the prayer which from the point of view of its best time is the time of Afternoon Prayers.

In any case it is better if one delays the prayer and performs it at the best time of Afternoon Prayers. And in this way if someone performs the Noon Prayers prayer at the end of the day then he has prayed in the common time of prayers and his making an intention for Noon Prayers means that its best time is Noon Prayers and from the aspect of the specified time, the common time and the best time the same is true for Evening and Night prayers.

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