

The reaction

*of people of faith and people
of negligence to the eclipse*



Sheikh

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In the Name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

According to scientific researchers: “The eclipse is a natural phenomenon which should be regarded without alarm.” This is what the people whose concern is only for this world say about the eclipse.

Various news reports give an indication of their activities on the occasion, which include:

- Medically-approved glasses are distributed to people so that they can enjoy these few moments.
- One country imported 50,000 pairs of special glasses to be used for watching the eclipse.
- People gather at specialized telescopes so that they have the opportunity to see the eclipse through advanced scientific means.
- British Airways organized two Concorde flights to observe the eclipse. The flights departed from Heathrow Airport and headed west for half the distance, then came back, so that the two hundred passengers could see the eclipse from an altitude of 58,000 feet, travelling at twice the speed of sound. All the tickets for both flights were sold out within a short period of time.
- In some countries people have been advised to stay in their houses and not to go out in the streets at all.

This is the reaction of the people of negligence. What about the people of faith?





Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated in his Saheeh: Baab As- Salaah fi Kusoof ash-Shams (Chapter on prayer when the sun is eclipsed):

From Abu Bakrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said: "We were with the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the sun was eclipsed. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, stood up, dragging his cloak, and went into the mosque. We went in too and he led us in praying two Rak'ahs (units of prayer), until the sun was uncovered again. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *'The sun and moon are not eclipsed for the death of anyone [or for the life of anyone]. [they are two of the signs of Allaah]. So if you see that, [then get up and pray] and make Du'aa' until what has happened to you [i.e. the eclipse] is over.'*" (REPORTED BY AL-BUKHAARI, 982)

[From 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, who said:](#)

"The sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, so the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, led the people in prayer. He stood for a long time, then he made Rukoo' for a long time, then he stood again for a long time but shorter than the first time, then he made Rukoo' for a long time but shorter than the first. Then he prostrated for a long time, then in the second Rak'ah he did the same as he had done in the first. Then he finished, and the eclipse was over. He addressed the people, first praising Allaah, then he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *'The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allaah. They do not become eclipsed for*





the death or life of anyone. If you see that, then pray to Allaah, say Takbeer ("Allaahu Akbar"), pray and give in charity.' Then he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: 'O Ummah (nation) of Muhammad, by Allaah there is no one more jealous than Allaah when His slave, male or female, commits Zina (adultery or fornication). O Ummah of Muhammad, if you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much.'" (REPORTED BY AL-BUKHAARI, 986)

Then Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated in Baab an-Nidaa' bi's- Salaah Jaami'ah fi'l-Kusoof (Chapter on calling "as-Salaatu Jaam'iah (i.e. the congregational prayer is about to start)" during an eclipse):

From 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, may Allaah be pleased with them both, who said: "When the sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, the call was given: 'as-Salaatu Jaam'iah (the congregational prayer is about to start)'." (REPORTED BY AL-BUKHAARI, 989)

Then Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated in Baab al-Ta'awwuth min 'Athaab al-Qabr fi'l-Kusoof (Chapter on seeking refuge from the punishment of the grave at the time of an eclipse) that:

"'Abdullaah ibn Muslimah told us from Maalik from Yahya ibn Sa'eed from 'Amrah bint 'Abdur-Rahmaan, may Allaah have mercy on them, from 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, the wife of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, that a Jewish woman came to ask her (for help) and said to her: "May Allaah protect you from the punishment of the





grave." 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, asked the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: "Will people be punished in their graves?" The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, explained the matter to her, seeking refuge with Allaah from that. Then one day, the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, went out in a funeral procession, and the sun was eclipsed and he came back at Dhuha (mid morning).

The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, passed between the apartments [of his wives], then he stood and prayed, and the people stood behind him. He stood for a long time, then he did Rukoo' for a long time, then he stood upright and stood for a long time, but less than the first time. Then he did Rukoo' for a long time, but less than the first Rukoo'. Then he stood upright, then he prostrated, then he stood up and stood for a long time, but less than the previous time. Then he did Rukoo' for a long time, but less than the previous Rukoo'. Then he stood for a long time, but less than the previous time, then he did Rukoo' for a long time but less than the previous time. Then he stood up, then he prostrated and finished the prayer. Then he spoke and said as much as Allaah willed he should say, then he commanded them to seek refuge with Allaah from the punishment of the grave." (REPORTED BY AL-BUKHAARI, 991)

Then Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated in Baab al-Jahr bi'l-Qiraa'ah fi'l-Kusoof (Chapter on reciting aloud during the eclipse prayer):





"Muhammad ibn Mahraan told us that al-Waleed ibn Muslim told us that Ibn Nimr informed us that Ibn Shihaab heard from 'Urwah from 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, recited aloud during the eclipse prayer (Salaat al-Kusoof). When he had finished reciting, he said 'Allaahu Akbar' and bowed. When he stood up from Rukoo' he said: '*Sami'a Allaahu liman hamidah Rabbanaa wa laka'l-hamd* (Allaah hears those who praise Him, [O] our Lord, to You be praise).' Then he recited again in Salaat al-Kusoof, four Rukoo's in two Rak'ahs and four Sajdahs (prostrations)." (REPORTED BY AL-BUKHAARI, 1004)

We will briefly discuss below the important points made by Al-Haafith ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaani, may Allaah have mercy on him, in his commentary on the Ahaadeeth narrated by Al-Bukhaari, with some adaptations and the addition of simple headings:

Solar and lunar eclipses are means used by Allaah to scare His slaves and remind them about the Day of Resurrection on which the moon will be eclipsed and the sun and moon will be rolled up

"Two signs" means two indicators. "The signs of Allaah" means things that indicate His Unity and the greatness of His Ability, or that alarm His slaves and remind them of His punishment and power. This is supported by the Aayah (what means):





"And We sent not the signs except to warn, and to make them afraid" [QUR'AAN, 17:59].

"Allaah frightens His slaves with them". In the Hadeeth about the eclipse narrated by al-Nu'maan ibn Basheer and others, may Allaah be pleased with them, a reason other than that claimed by the astronomers is given. This was narrated by Ahmad, an-Nasaa'i and Ibn Maajah, and classed as Saheeh by Ibn Khuzaymah and al-Haakim, may Allaah have mercy on them, with the wording: *"The sun and the moon do not get eclipsed for the death or birth of anyone. They are two of the signs of Allaah, and when Allaah manifests Himself to any of His creation, it fears Him and humbles itself before Him."*

The Hadeeth was proven Saheeh by a number of scholars, and it is also Saheeh according to its meaning, because light has to do with physical beauty (Jamaal), but if the attribute of majesty (Jalaal) is made manifest, the lights will be extinguished out of fear of Allaah. This is supported by the Aayah (what means):

"So when his Lord appeared to the mountain. He made it collapse to dust" [QUR'AAN, 7:143]

This Hadeeth also supports the account which we narrated from al-Taawoos, may Allaah have mercy on him, who looked at the sun when it was eclipsed and wept until he almost died, and said, "It fears Allaah more than we do."





Ibn Daqeeq al'Eed, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: perhaps some of them think that what the mathematicians say contradicts the words of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: *"Allaah frightens His slaves with them"*.

But this is not the case at all, because Allaah does some things according to the ordinary laws of the universe, and He does other things that go beyond these ordinary laws, for He is above all causes and He can override whatever natural laws He wishes. Once this is understood, those who know Allaah believe that He is able to do all manner of extraordinary things, and that He does what He wills. So when something out of the ordinary happens, they fear Allaah because of the strength of their belief. This is not to say that there may be regular instances of cause and effect, which Allaah can override if He wills. So to sum up, what the mathematicians say is correct, but this does not mean that this event is not the means of Allaah alarming His slaves.

Ruling on Salaat al-Kusooif

Al-Bukhaari's chapter heading, "Baab al- Salaah fi Kusooif al-Shams (Chapter on Prayer at the time of a solar eclipse)" implies that it is prescribed in Islam. This is a matter on which there is scholarly consensus, but there were some differences as to the ruling and description of the prayer. The majority stated that it is Sunnah Mu'akkadah (confirmed Sunnah).





The Prophet's nervous haste at the time of the eclipse

"The Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, got up dragging his cloak." A report narrated from Yoonus, may Allaah be pleased with him, adds the word "rushing". Muslim, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated from Asma', may Allaah be pleased with her: "The sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and he rushed nervously and put on his coat of mail, thinking that it was his cloak." In other words, he wanted to put on his cloak, but he put on his coat of mail instead, because he was preoccupied with the eclipse.

Lengthening the prayer until the eclipse is over

"Until [the eclipse] was over." This indicates that the prayer should be made lengthy until the eclipse is over. Al-Tahhaawi, may Allaah have mercy on him, replied that the phrase "offer Salaah and make Du'aa'" indicates that if the Salaam at the end of the Salaah is said before the eclipse is over, one should keep busy making Du'aa' until it is over. This was also stated by Ibn Daqeeq al-'Eed, may Allaah have mercy on him, who said that the aim of both (Salaah and Du'aa') is the same, and that the prayer does not need to be made long or repeated.

"The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *'The sun...'*" According to a report narrated by Ibn Khuzaymah: "When the





eclipse was over, he addressed us and said..." This indicates that the end of the eclipse does not mean that there should be no Khutbah or speech by the Imaam.

Refutation of Jaahili beliefs concerning eclipses

"For the death of anyone": According to another report: "That was because a son of the Prophet , sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, who was called Ibraaheem had died, so the people said it was because of that."

According to another report: "The people said, the sun is eclipsed because of the death of Ibraaheem." According to yet another report: "The sun was eclipsed at the time of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and he rushed out to the mosque, dragging his garment. He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, kept praying until the eclipse was over, and when it was over he said: *'The people are claiming that the sun and moon only become eclipsed for the death of some great person. This is not the case...'*" This Hadeeth refutes the belief of the people of the Jaahiliyyah (pre-Islaamic era of ignorance), who thought that the heavenly bodies had some influence over the earth. This is like what was said in the Hadeeth about asking for rain: "They say that our rain was foretold by such and such." Al-Khattaabi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "During the Jaahiliyyah, they used to believe that an eclipse meant that something would happen on earth, such as a death or some harmful event, so the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,



taught them that this was a false belief, and that the sun and moon were two created entities that were subjugated to the control of Allaah, they had no power over anything else and were unable to protect themselves.”

“(nor) the life of anyone”: The reason why life or birth is mentioned is in order to refute the false notion of those who say that just because an eclipse is not the cause of loss is not to say that it is not the cause of something positive.

Eclipses demonstrate the repugnant nature of the idea of worshipping the sun or moon. Some scholars interpreted the command in the Aayah (which means): *“but prostrate to Allaah Who created them [the sun and moon]”* [QUR'AAN, 41:37] as referring to Salaat al-Kusoof, because this is the time when it is most appropriate to turn away from worshipping them, because of the changes and shortcomings that are manifest in them at such times, and Allaah is far above such things, may He be glorified and exalted.

Timing of Salaat al-Kusoof

“So stand up and pray” indicates that there is no specific timing for Salaat al-Kusoof, because this prayer is connected to seeing the eclipse, and an eclipse could happen at any time of day. This was the view of ash-Shaafi'i, may Allaah have mercy on him, and those who followed him. What is meant is that this act of worship should be done before the eclipse is over, and the scholars agreed that the prayer should not be done once the event has passed.





History of eclipses during the time of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam

“The day when Ibraaheem died” refers to the son of the Prophet , sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. The majority of biographers and scholars of Seerah (Prophetic biography) stated that he died in 10 AH, and it was said that he died in Rabe'e' al-Awwal or in Ramadhaan.

Most of the scholars stated that this happened on the tenth of the month, or on the fourteenth.

What people should do

“So hasten” means, “seek refuge” or “turn to”, and implies that people should rush to do what is commanded here. Turning to Allaah at times of fear by making Du'aa' (supplication) and seeking His forgiveness will wipe out the sins that have happened, which hopefully will remove the cause of the event which has brought fear. Sins are the cause of trials and punishment in this world and the next. We ask Allaah for His mercy and forgiveness.

“The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, got up in haste, thinking that the Hour had come” means he feared that the Hour was at hand.

Perhaps he feared that the eclipse was a precursor to some of the Signs of the Hour, such as the sun rising from the west. It is not impossible that between the eclipse and the





sun's rising from the west many of the things that were mentioned could happen one after another. We should remember the words of Allaah (which mean):

"And the matter of the Hour is not but as the twinkling of the eye, or even nearer." [QUR'AAN, 16:77].

In order to explain how serious the issue of eclipses is, he explained to those of his Ummah who witness such a thing how they should fear Allaah and hasten to pray, especially if that happens after the Signs of the Hour or most of them have come to pass.

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "These are signs which are sent by Allaah" then he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "But Allaah makes His slaves afraid by means of them." This is in accordance with the Aayah (which means):

"And We sent not the signs except to warn, and to make them afraid (of destruction)" [QUR'AAN, 17:59]

It is understood from this that the command to hasten to remember Allaah, make Du'aa', seek forgiveness, etc. is not confined only to solar and lunar eclipses, because the signs of Allaah are more general than that.





Giving charity at the time of an eclipse

In the narrations concerning eclipses, there is the command to pray, to give charity, to remember Allaah, to make Du'aa', etc. They are listed in order of priority.

Chapter on seeking refuge with Allaah from the punishment of the grave during an eclipse

Al-Bukhaari, may Allaah have mercy on him, said, "Baab al-Ta'awwudh Billaah min 'adhaab al-qabr fi'l-kusoof (Chapter on seeking refuge with Allaah from the punishment of the grave during an eclipse)". Ibn al-Muneer, may Allaah have mercy on him, said in his comment:

"The reason why one should seek refuge at the time of an eclipse is that the daytime darkness that occurs during an eclipse is like the darkness in the grave even during the day. So one is reminded of a thing by something that is similar to it. So we should fear the one as we fear the other, and from this we learn that we should adhere to that which can save us from the calamities of the Hereafter."

What he recited during the prayer

"He stood for a long time." According to the report of Ibn Shihaab, may Allaah be pleased with him: "He recited a lengthy recitation." At the end of the prayer, according to other reports: "he recited a long Soorah (Chapter)." According to the Hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with them both, which appears four chapters later:





“He recited something as long as Chapter al-Baqarah in the first Rak’ah.” Something similar was narrated by Abu Daawood via Sulaymaan ibn Yassar, may Allaah have mercy on them, from ‘Urwah, may Allaah be pleased with him, in which it is added that “in the first standing of the second Rak’ah, he recited something as long as Aal ‘Imraan.”

How the prayer is performed

“Then he stood up and stood for a long time.” According to the report of Ibn Shihaab, may Allaah be pleased with him: “Then he said ‘Sami’a Allaahu liman hamidah (Allaah listens to the one who praises Him)’. Another report at the end of the chapter on eclipses adds the phrase: ‘Rabbanaa wa laka’l-hamd (our Lord to You be praise).” From this it is understood that it is Mustahabb (recommended) to recite the prescribed phrases (Thikr) when standing up at the beginning of the second standing in the first Rak’ah. Some of the later Shaafi’is found this problematic because they thought that it referred to the standing for recitation (the first standing), not the standing after Rukoo’. Their evidence for this was the scholarly consensus among those who said that the Rukoo’ in each Rak’ah should last longer than the recitation of al-Faatihah, although Muhammad ibn Muslimah al-Maaliki differed from them in that regard.

The response to this is that Salaat al-Kusoof is unique and there is no room for Qiyaas (analogy) in this case. Everything that it is proven that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did in this prayer is prescribed for it, because it is in a class of its own. So the majority refuted those who compared





it to Naafil (supererogatory) prayers and thus said that the second Rukoo' should not be added. When there is a text, Qiyaas diminishes in significance. Salaat al-Kusoof is more akin to Salaat al-'Eed and the like, prayers which are in a class of their own among the Naafil prayers. Salaat al-Janaazah (funeral prayer) is distinguished by the absence of Rukoo' and Sujood, Salaat al-Eedayn ('Eed prayer) by its extra Takbeeraat, and Salaat al-Khawf (fear prayer) by extra actions and not necessarily facing the Qiblah. By the same token, Salaat al-Kusoof is distinguished by having an extra-long Rukoo'.

"He made the Rukoo' long." The scholars agreed that no Qur'aan is to be recited in this Rukoo', only Thikr such as Tasbeeh ("Subhaan Allaah"), Takbeer ("Allaahu Akbar") and so on.

"Then he finished" i.e., finished the prayer. "And the eclipse was over." According to the report of Ibn Shihaab, may Allaah be pleased with him: "The eclipse ended before he had finished." An-Nasaa'i said: "Then he recited the Tashahhud and said the Salaam [i.e., ended the prayer]."

"Chapter on lengthy Sujood in (Salaat) al-Kusoof." The Saheeh narrations prove that the Sujood should be long.

"I never did any Sujood that was longer than in that prayer." This is what is said in the Hadeeth. According to another report: "I never did any Sujood that was longer than that Sujood." Muslim, may Allaah have mercy on him, added: "And I never did any Rak'ah that was longer than that." We





have already quoted the report of 'Urwah from 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with them: "Then he prostrated and made the prostration long."

The two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhaari and Muslim) narrated from Abu Moosa, may Allaah be pleased with him, that "[these were] the longest Qiyaam (standing), Rukoo' (bowing) and Sujood (prostration) that I have ever seen." Abu Daawood and an-Nasaa'i reported from Samurah, may Allaah be pleased with him: "As if it were the longest sujood in any prayer in which he ever led us." From all of these narrations it is clear that the Sujood in Salaat al-Kusoof should be made long, as is the case with the standing and Rukoo'.

Muslim, may Allaah have mercy on him, reported from Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, that "his Sujood was like his Rukoo'." This is the Math-hab of Ahmad and Ishaq, and is one of the two opinions of ash-Shaafi'i, may Allaah have mercy on them all. It was confirmed by the scholars from the Hadeeth of his Companions, and this was the view of an-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy on him.

Note: In the Hadeeth of Jaabir, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated by Muslim, may Allaah have mercy on him, which I referred to above, it says that the Qiyaam (standing) which was followed by the Sujood was made long. The wording is: "Then he did Rukoo' and made it long, then he prostrated."

An-Nasaa'i, Ibn Khuzaymah and others narrated from 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Amr, may Allaah be pleased with him: "Then he





did Rukoo' and bowed for so long that it was said, he will never stand up. Then he stood up and stood for so long that it was said, he will never prostrate. Then he prostrated for so long that it was said, he will never sit up. Then he sat up and sat for so long that it was said, he will never prostrate, then he prostrated..." The Hadeeth is Saheeh, and I have not found anything in any report that indicates that the sitting between the two prostrations should be long, apart from this report.

"Chapter: the first Rak'ah in (Salaat) al-Kusoof should be longer."

In this Chapter it says: "Then he stood up for a long time, but it was shorter than the previous standing." This was reported by al-Ismaa'eeli, may Allaah have mercy on him, with the wording: "The first was longer than what came after." This contains evidence for those who say that the first standing of the second Rak'ah should be shorter than the last standing of the first Rak'ah... So each standing should be shorter than the one which came before. What also makes this view more likely to be correct is the fact that if what was meant by the phrase "the previous standing" was the first standing in the first Rak'ah only, then the second and third standing would be omitted and no reference would be made to how long they should be. The other interpretation makes more sense. And Allaah knows best.





The reports narrated on how Salaat al-Kusoof should be done

From these reports it is understood that Salaat al-Kusoof takes a particular form: it is longer than usual in the standing etc., and there is an extra Rukoo' in each Rak'ah.

In some manuscripts of Al-Bukhaari there is a chapter heading: "Baab subb al-mar'ah 'ala ra'sihaa al-ma' itha ataala al-imaam al-qiyaam fi'l-rak'ah al-oola) A woman pouring water over her head if the Imaam makes the first standing of the first Rak'ah very long)" – i.e., if a person is about to faint whilst praying. This also indicates that this action does not invalidate the prayer.

The Khutbah

"He addressed the people." This indicates that it is prescribed for there to be a Khutbah on the occasion of an eclipse.

It also indicates that if the eclipse ends, this does not mean the Khutbah does not have to be given; in contrast, if the eclipse ends before the prayer is started, then neither the prayer nor the Khutbah should be done.

"He praised Allaah." An-Nasaa'i added, in the Hadeeth of Samurah, may Allaah be pleased with him: "And he bore witness that he was the slave and Messenger of Allaah."





“Remember Allaah.” According to the report of al-Kashmehni, may Allaah have mercy on him: “Call on Allaah [make Du'aa’].”

“By Allaah, there is no one” – the oath serves to re-affirm what is said, even though those who were listening had no doubts about it.

“There is no one who is more jealous” this refers to the protectiveness and pride, which one originally has towards one's wife and family.

Since they were commanded to ward off calamity by remembering Allaah, making Du'aa’, praying and giving in charity, it is appropriate to deter them from committing the sins which are the cause of the calamity befalling them. Zina (adultery or fornication) is singled out because it is the most serious of sins in that regard. Or it was said that this was because this is the most repugnant of sins and has the worst effect on people and stirs up anger, hence it is appropriate to scare them in this situation by reminding them of the punishment of the jealous Lord, may He be glorified and exalted.

“O Ummah of Muhammad.” This is because here he is in a position of warning and alarming them. Another example is the phrase: “O Faatimah daughter of Muhammad, I cannot protect you from Allaah in the slightest...” The Prophet, sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, started his Khutbah with an oath to reaffirm what he was going to say, even though there is no doubt about its truth.





We may also understand from the phrase “O Ummah of Muhammad” that the preacher should not use his preaching to exalt himself; rather he should be extremely humble because this is more effective in helping his audience to benefit from what he is saying.

“If you knew what I know” means, the great power of Allaah and His vengeance upon the sinners.

“You would laugh little” means, you would give up laughing and would laugh very rarely, because of the overwhelming fear and grief.

The Hadeeth indicates that the Khutbah should be more frightening than lenient, because mentioning leniency is more in tune with people’s hearts which are naturally inclined towards their own desires, but the wise doctor treats an ailment with its opposite, not with something that will only make it worse.

“Chapter: the Imaam’s Khutbah on the occasion of an eclipse.” The scholars differed with regard to the Khutbah. Al-Shaafi’i, Ishaq and most of the scholars of Hadeeth, may Allaah have mercy on them, regarded it as Mustahabb. Ibn Qudaamah, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: “We did not hear anything to that effect from Ahmad.” The author of al-Hidaayah, one of the Hanafis, said: “There is no Khutbah on the occasion of an eclipse because nothing to that effect was transmitted.” ... Some of them responded that the Prophet , sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not intend to give a Khutbah exclusively because of the eclipse, but because he





wanted to explain to them what was wrong with the belief that eclipses happen because of a person's death. The Saheeh narrations describe the Khutbah and its features such as praising Allaah and preaching, etc. The narrations did not refer only to the reason for the eclipse. The basic principle of Islam is to follow the example of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,, and the details are only to be proven with the proper evidence (Daleel).

Ibn Daqeeq al-'Eed, may Allaah have mercy on him, considered this interpretation to be weak and said: "The Khutbah cannot be confined to a certain idea after you have done what is required, i.e., praising Allaah and preaching. Everything that has been mentioned concerning explaining the causes of the eclipse and other things is among the purpose of the Khutbah. So we should follow the example of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the Imaam should mention that in his Khutbah on the occasion of the eclipse." Yes, Ibn Qudaamah, may Allaah have mercy on him, thought that Khutbat al-Kusoof is like Khutbat al-Jumu'ah (Friday sermon) and Khutbat al-'Eedayn ('Eed sermon), but there is nothing to indicate that in the narrations that have been mentioned. (REPORTED BY AL-BUKHAARI 988)

Is it obligatory to pray Salaat al-Kusoof in congregation ?

"To the prayer" means to a specific, known prayer. From this it is understood that praying in congregation is not essential for it to be valid, because the Hadeeth refers to him rushing and hastening. (But praying in congregation is indicated by the Prophet's actions, so it is Sunnah, but it is alright for a





Muslim to pray Salaat al-Kusoof individually, male or female, settled or travelling).

Chapter: Salaat al-Kusoof in the mosque

This is understood from the phrase “he passed between the apartments”, because the apartments were the homes of the wives of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,, which were attached to the mosque, as has been stated. According to Muslim the wording is:

“I came out among some women between the apartments and into the mosque, and the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, came from his funeral escort to the place where he usually prayed...” The funeral escort was because his son Ibraaheem had died. When the Prophet , sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, came back (from the funeral), he went to the mosque. If it were not the Sunnah to pray Salaat al-Kusoof in the mosque, praying it in the desert it may make it easier to see when the eclipse ends. And Allaah knows best.

Women may pray Salaat al-Kusoof with men

This is a refutation of those who say that this is not allowed and that women should pray individually... in al-Mudawwanah it says: women should pray at home and only old women should come out (to the mosque). According to ash-Shaafi'i everyone should come out apart from women who are stunningly beautiful (because they may tempt men).





Remembering Allaah at the time of the eclipse with all kinds of Islaamically prescribed phrases

“and remember Allaah”: According to the report of al-Kashmehni, may Allaah have mercy on him, “and remember Him” – with the pronoun referring to Allaah.

“Allaah frightens His slaves with it.” This is encouraging us to seek forgiveness at the time of the eclipse and at other times, because this is one of the things that can ward off calamity.

What the Muslim historians said

In al-Bidayyah wa’l-Nihaayah it says:

“In Jumaada al-Aakhirah (453 AH), two days before the end of the month, the sun was eclipsed totally, with its entire disk being obscured.

The people stayed like that for four hours, until the stars appeared and the birds fled to their nests and stopped flying because it was so dark.”

Elsewhere in the book, the author, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

“On the morning of Sunday, the twenty-eighth of the month mentioned (Jumaada al-Aakhirah), the sun was eclipsed before noon.”





Conclusion

What is our attitude on the medical aspects?

It is wise not to stare at the sun during the eclipse, because it has been proven medically that this is harmful. There is nothing wrong with eye doctors being present in their clinics and hospitals to deal with emergency cases, as this is a reasonable precaution. However, people should not ignore this great act of worship – Salaat al-Kusoof during the eclipse with which Allaah frightens His slaves – for the sake of enjoying looking at the eclipse with special glasses or using other instruments or cameras. This is the height of negligence on this occasion.

People are afraid of the dangers of ultra-violet rays because of the complications that may cause and the possibility that they may burn the eye and destroy its cells and damage the lens. They fear that infra-red rays may burn the eye without a person even feeling it.

We should fear the Day when eyes will burnt when a person can feel it!

O Allaah, make us fear You and make us content to put our trust in You. Give us the strength to obey You and do not humiliate us by letting us disobey You. Help us to remember You and to thank You and to worship You properly. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

