

The Earthquake and Hurricane prayer is similar to the Eclipse prayer

Taken from the explanation of Zaad Al-Mustaqni by Shaykh Uthaymeen

Shaykh Uthaymeen: The author said: If there is a sign other than an earthquake, it is not prayed. Meaning: If there is a sign that causes fear such as lightning and strong winds, light during the night, darkness during the night, a volcano eruption or the like, the eclipse prayer is not prayed. The eclipse prayer is not prayed (for other than an eclipse) except during an earthquake. **If there is an earthquake the people pray the eclipse prayer until it stops.**

The scholars differ, having three statements about this issue.

The first viewpoint is the viewpoint of the author. The eclipse prayer is not prayed during any sign (other than the eclipse) that causes fear except for an earthquake. Their argument is that during the era of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم there were strong winds, storms and heavy rain and other than that from the signs that cause fear, and he did not pray during these events.

As for their proof that the eclipse prayer can be prayed during an earthquake; it has been narrated that Abdullah ibn Abbas and Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنهما used to pray during earthquakes. Thus the proof for praying the eclipse prayer during an earthquake is the action of the Companions.

(The second view point) Some of the scholars say the eclipse prayer is only prayed during a solar or lunar eclipse and it is not prayed during other great signs which cause fear. This is based upon the statement of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

وَلَكِنَّهُمَا آيَاتَانِ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُمَا فَصَلُّوا

But they are two signs from the signs of Allah, so if you see them, then pray.
(Sahih al-Bukhari 1057)

And he (the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not pray the eclipse prayer due to other signs that cause fear. As for what has been narrated concerning Ibn Abbas or Ali – if it's authentic – this was independent reasoning which opposes what was narrated from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he left off praying due to other things that cause fear.

Some of the scholars say – and this is **the third viewpoint** – the eclipse prayer is prayed during any sign that causes fear. They use as proof a general reason, which is the statement of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

إنهما آيتان من آيات الله يخوف بهما عباده

They are two signs from the signs of Allah; by way of them He frightens His slaves. (Sahih Muslim 911)

Thus every sign that causes fear, the eclipse prayer is prayed. Likewise, the distress which comes from some of these signs is more severe than the stress resulting from the eclipse. And what has been narrated concerning Ibn Abbas and Ali proves they did not only pray due to the eclipse; rather every sign that causes fear, the eclipse prayer is prayed. When a matter became serious to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم he would go and pray. When something troubled him he would go pray. Even if this narration is weak¹ this is what can be understood from the statement of the Exalted:

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ﴿٤٥﴾

And seek help in patience and prayer
(Soorah Al-Baqarah 2:45)

As for what was mentioned, that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم experienced storms and thunderstorms during his era; this is not proof against what we have said, because these winds could have been normal to them. And something which is normal does not cause fear even if it is severe. For example, during the summer the people are accustomed to the wind blowing hard but this is not considered something that frightens them. It is true that sometimes there will be consecutive great strikes of lightning which frightens the people, but was the lightning during the time of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم like this? No one is able to affirm that the lightning during the time of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was unusual. And that which is normal does not cause fear, because the people are used to it so they do not fear it. But if there are great consecutive lightning strikes; there is no doubt that this will frighten the people. So in this situation they go pray to their Lord. This was the final viewpoint held by Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله. And this is a very strong viewpoint because his statement: "They are two signs from the signs of Allah; by way of them He frightens His slaves" necessitates that it is prescribed to pray the eclipse prayer for every sign that causes fear.

Zaad al-Mustaqni' the book of prayer Tape-67a

Translated by Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee

¹ Translator's note: Narrated by Hudaifah: If something troubled the Prophet peace be upon him he would get up and pray. (Abu Dawood (1319) and classed as Hasan by al-Albani in Sahih Abi Dawood (1319)