49020 - Guidance of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) regarding Eid prayers

the question

I would like to know the guidance of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) regarding Eid prayers.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to offer the Eid prayers in the prayer-place (musalla). There is no report of his offering the Eid prayer in his mosque.

Al-Shaafa'i said in al-Umm: It was narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go out on the two Eids to the prayer-place in Madeenah, as did those (caliphs) who came after him, unless there was an excuse such as rain etc. The people of other lands did likewise, apart from the people of Makkah.

He used to wear his most beautiful garments to go out to pray. He had a suit (hullah) which he would wear for Eid and Jumu'ah (Friday prayer). A hullah is a two-piece suit of the same kind of fabric.

He used to eat dates before going out on Eid al-Fitr, and he would eat an odd number of them.

Al-Bukhari (953) narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not go out on the morning of Eid al-Fitr until he had eaten some dates, and he would eat an odd number.

Ibn Qudamah said: We do not know of any differing opinion concerning the fact that it is

mustahabb to eat early on the day of Eid al-Fitr.

The reason for eating before the prayer is so that no one will think that it is essential to fast until the prayer has been offered.

And it was said that this was in order to hasten to obey the command of Allah Who enjoined breaking the fast after He enjoined fasting.

If no dates are available, he should have something else for breakfast, even if it is only water, so that he can fulfil the Sunnah in principle, which is to have something for breakfast before praying on Eid al-Fitr.

With regard to Eid al-Adha, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used not to eat anything until he came back from the prayer-place, then he would eat some of the meat of his sacrifice.

It was narrated that he used to do ghusl for both Eids. Ibn al-Qayyim said: Two weak (da'eef) hadeeths have been narrated concerning this… but it was proven from Ibn 'Umar, who was very keen to follow the Sunnah, that he used to do ghusl before going out on the day of Eid.

And he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go out to the Eid prayer walking, and come back walking.

Ibn Maajah (1295) narrated that Ibn 'Umar said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go out to the Eid (prayer) walking and come back walking. Classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh Ibn Maajah.

Al-Tirmidhi (530) narrated that 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib said: It is Sunnah to go out to the Eid (prayer) walking. Classed as hasan by al-Albani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

Al-Tirmidhi said: Most of the scholars followed this hadeeth and said that it is mustahabb for a man to go out to the Eid (prayer) walking. It is mustahabb for him not to ride unless he has an excuse.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reached the prayer-place, he would

begin the prayer with no adhaan or iqaamah, and without saying “Al-salaatu jaami’ah (prayer is about to begin).” The Sunnah is not to do any of these things.

And he did not offer any prayer in the prayer-place before or after the Eid prayer.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would start with the prayer, before the khutbah. He prayed two rak’ahs, with seven consecutive takbeers in the first rak’ah, including takbeerat al-ihraam (the takbeer with which the prayer begins), and a brief pause between each two takbeers. There is no report of him saying any particular dhikr between the takbeers, but it was narrated that Ibn Mas’ood would praise Allah and send blessings upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

But Ibn ‘Umar, who was always keen to follow the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), used to raise his hands with each takbeer.

When he had completed the takbeers, he would start to recite. He would recite al-Faatihah then recite Qaf wa’l-Quran il-majeed (Soorah Qaaf 50) in the first rak’ah and Aqtarabat il-saa’ah wa anshaqqa al-qamar (Soorat al-Qamar 54) in the other. Sometimes he recited Sabbih isma rabbika al-A’la (Soorat al-A’laa 87) and Hal ataaka hadeeth al-ghaashiyah (Soorat al-Ghaashiyah 88). Both were narrated in saheeh reports, but no other soorahs are mentioned in saheeh reports. When he had finished reciting he would say takbeer and bow. When he had finished bowing and prostrating and had stood up again, he would say five takbeers. When he had completed the takbeers he would start to recite again. The takbeer was the first thing that he would do in each rak’ah and his recitation was followed by rukoo’ (bowing).

Al-Timridhi narrated from the hadeeth of Katheer ibn ‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited takbeer in the Eid (prayer), seven times in the first rak’ah before reciting Quran and five times in the second rak’ah before reciting Quran. Al-Tirmidhi said: I asked Muhammad – i.e., al-Bukhari – about this hadeeth and he said: There is nothing more sound than this concerning this topic. And I say likewise.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had finished the prayer, he would move away and stand facing the people, with the people sitting in their rows, and he would address them, preaching and exhorting, with commands and prohibitions. If he wanted to dispatch anyone on a mission he would do so, and if he wanted to enjoin anything he would do that.

There was no minbar on which he would stand, and the minbar of Madeenah was not brought out. Rather he would address them standing on the ground. Jaabir said: I attended Eid prayer with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He started with the prayer before the khutbah, with no adhaan and no iqaamah, then he stood, leaning on Bilaal, and enjoined us to fear and obey Allah. He preached to the people and reminded them, then he went over to the women and preached to them and reminded them. Agreed upon.

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go out on the day of al-Fitr and al-Adha to the prayer place. He would start with the prayer, then he would go and stand facing the people, with the people sitting in their rows… This hadeeth was narrated by Muslim.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) started all his khutbahs with praise of Allah. It is not narrated even in one hadeeth that he started the khutbah of Eid with takbeer. Rather Ibn Maajah narrated in his Sunan (1287) that Sa'd al-Qaraz, the muezzin of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to say the takbeer between the two sermons and he used to say takbeer a great deal throughout the khutbah of Eid. This was classed as da'eef by al-Albani in Da'eef Ibn Maajah. Although the hadeeth is da'eef, it does not indicate that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to begin his khutbah with takbeer.

It says in Tamaam al-Mannah: Although it does not indicate that it is prescribed to begin the Eid khutbah with takbeer, its isnaad is da'eef and includes one man who is da'eef (weak) and another who is majhool (unknown), so it is not permissible to quote it as evidence that it is Sunnah to say takbeer during the khutbah.

Ibn al-Qayyim said:

People differed as to how the khutbah on Eid and on the occasion of prayers for rain (istisqa') should begin. It was said that they should begin with takbeer and it was said that the khutbah of istisqa' should begin with prayers for forgiveness, and it was said that they should begin with praise. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: this is the correct view. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to begin all his khutbahs with praise of Allah.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) granted a concession allowing those who attended the Eid prayers either to sit and listen to the khutbah, or to leave.

Abu Dawood (1155) narrated that 'Abd-Allah ibn al-Saa'ib said: I attended Eid (prayer) with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and when he had finished the prayer he said: "We are going to deliver the khutbah, so whoever wants to sit and listen to the khutbah, let him do so, and whoever wants to leave, let him go." Classed as saheeh by al-Albani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to vary his route on the day of Eid. He would go by one route and come back by another.

Al-Bukhari narrated (986) that Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allah said: On the day of Eid, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would vary his route.