

# DETERMINING THE BEGINNING OF PRAYER TIMES IN ABNORMAL REGIONS

(The Perspective of Wahbah az-Zuhaili in *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*)

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## **Abstract:**

Determining the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions is a contemporary issue facing the Muslim community, leading to diverse opinions among Islamic scholars. This paper focuses on the perspective of Wahbah az-Zuhaili, known for his moderate (*tawasuth*) thought, as presented in his renowned book, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method based on library research. Primary data is sourced directly from *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, while secondary data is derived from literature related to the determination of prayer times in abnormal regions. The data is analyzed using a descriptive-deductive method and the Double Movement theory. Wahbah az-Zuhaili posits that the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions should follow the schedule of the nearest region with normal prayer times, and should not be based on conjecture. When contextualized within the challenges and needs of contemporary society, his perspective proves highly relevant, offering a viable jurisprudential (*fiqh*)

solution for Muslims living in or visiting abnormal regions to perform their prayers (*salat*).

**Keywords:** *Abnormal Regions; Al-Fiqh Al-Islami wa Adillatuhu; Prayer Times; Wabbah Az-Zuhaili;*

## Introduction

In today's modern era, the Muslim population has spread across the globe. Many have chosen to settle in various countries, while others spend their time on vacation or business (*musaffir*). Different places on Earth naturally have varying lengths of day and night due to the Earth's movement (axial tilt), which results in the Sun's declination. This phenomenon directly affects the five daily prayers (*salat*) performed by Muslims. For those in normal regions<sup>1</sup> (where the lengths of day and night are nearly equal), the prayer times are regular. However, for those in abnormal regions,<sup>2</sup> the prayer times are irregular. This can manifest as days without the disappearance of the red twilight (meaning no observable time for *Isha'* and *Subuh* prayers), days without sunlight (no *Dhuhur*, *Asr*, and *Maghrib*), or prolonged nights (no *Subuh*, *Maghrib*, and *Isha'*). In the context of worship, these are referred to as abnormal regions.

To address this issue, Islamic scholars have proposed several solutions for determining the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions, such as: following the schedule of the nearest city or country, adopting the prayer times of Mecca or Medina, interpolating the times, or performing the prayers later as *qadha*. Among the many scholarly views, significant differences of opinion naturally exist. In this study, the perspective of Wahbah az-Zuhaili in his book *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* is taken as the primary reference. This choice is based on the fact that Wahbah az-Zuhaili was not dogmatic about his own school of jurisprudence (*madhhab*) and consistently respected the opinions of other schools, a trait evident in his exegesis of Quranic verses related to *fiqh*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of worship, regions where the implementation of prayer times complies with Sharia are called normal regions..

<sup>2</sup> In the context of worship, regions where the implementation of prayer times does not comply with Sharia are called abnormal regions.

<sup>3</sup> Syaiful Amin Ghofur, *Mozaik Musafir Al-Quran* (Yogyakarta: Kaukaba Dipantara, 2013), 136–37.

Wahbah az-Zuhaili is known for his moderate (*tawasuth*) approach, being neither overly conservative nor liberal. In his various opinions, he strongly emphasized three principles: avoiding hardship (*raf' al-haraj*), repelling harm (*dar' al-mafsadah*), and promoting public interest (*jalb al-maṣlahah*). This methodology allows for the selection of the most beneficial opinion among the schools of *fiqh* for a specific context (*fiqh tarjih*). The book *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, the primary source for this research, is his monumental work, as it discusses Islamic jurisprudence from various *madhhabs* with a deep, comparative approach. This work has become an essential reference for students and Muslim scholars worldwide. Based on these considerations, Wahbah az-Zuhaili's perspective on determining the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions is a compelling topic for in-depth study.

This research aims to address three main questions. First, what is the brief biography of Wahbah az-Zuhaili and the background of his book *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*? Second, what is the correlation between the Earth's movement and the determination of the beginning of prayer times worldwide? Lastly, what is Wahbah az-Zuhaili's perspective on the determination of the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions in his book, what is the legal reasoning (*'illah*) behind his opinion, and is this perspective still relevant today?

## Literature Review

Numerous studies have already been conducted on the determination of prayer times in abnormal regions. These include: first, an article by Zavitri Galuh Prameswari and Masun (2024) titled "The Perspective of Minority Fiqh of Yusuf Al-Qardhawi in Determining the Beginning of Prayer Times in the Polar Regions."<sup>4</sup> Second, an article by Muhammad Najib and Dewi Chamidatul Chusna (2023) titled "Prayer Times in the Polar Regions in the Book *Al-Ma'ayir Al-Fiqhiyyah wa Al-Falakiyyah fi I'dad At-Taqawim Al-Hijriyyah*: Problems and Solutions."<sup>5</sup> Third, an article by Imroatul Munfaridah (2021) titled

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<sup>4</sup> Zavitri Galuh Prameswari and Mahsun Mahsun, 'Perspektif Fiqih Minoritas Yusuf Al-Qardhawi Dalam Penentuan Awal Waktu Salat Di Daerah Kutub', *El-Faqih: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Hukum Islam* 10, no. 2 (October 2024): 334–49, <https://doi.org/10.58401/faqih.v10i2.1480>.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Najib and Dewi Chamidatul Chusna, 'Waktu Sholat Daerah Kutub Dalam Kitab *Al-Ma'ayir Al-Fiqhiyyah Wa Al-Falakiyyah Fi I'dad At-*

“Problems and Solutions Concerning the Determination of Prayer and Fasting Times in Abnormal (Polar) Regions.”<sup>6</sup> Based on the three preceding literature reviews, no research has yet focused specifically on the perspective of Wahbah az-Zuhaili in his book *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* regarding the determination of the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions.

## Research Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a library research approach. The primary data is sourced from the book *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* by Wahbah az-Zuhaili, while the secondary data is obtained from other written works related to the determination of prayer times in abnormal regions. All data are analyzed deductively, beginning by generally describing the data concerning the correlation between the Earth's movement and prayer times globally, then focusing specifically on the determination of the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions from the perspective of Wahbah az-Zuhaili in his book. The analysis also incorporates Fazlur Rahman's Double Movement theory to identify the *'illah* of Wahbah az-Zuhaili's perspective and to assess its contemporary relevance.<sup>7</sup>

## Result and Discussion

### Biography of Wahbah Az-Zuhaili

Wahbah Az-Zuhaili was a prominent Islamic scholar of the 20th century. His full name was Wahbah bin Mustafa Az-Zuhaili, and he was born on March 6, 1932, in the village of Dir 'Athiyah, in the Qalmun region near Damascus, Syria. He came from a modest family. His father, H. Mustafa Az-Zuhaili, was a farmer known for his piety and for having memorized the Qur'an, while his mother, Hj. Fatimah

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Taqowiim Al-Hijriyyah: Problem Dan Solusinya', *MIYAH: Jurnal Studi Islam* 19, no. 01 (July 2023): 01.

<sup>6</sup> Imroatul Munfaridah, 'Problematica Dan Solusinya Tentang Penentuan Waktu Shalat Dan Puasa Di Daerah Abnormal (Kutub)', *Al-Syakhsyiyah: Journal of Law & Family Studies* 3, no. 1 (July 2021): 1, <https://doi.org/10.21154/syakhsyiyah.v3i1.2985>.

<sup>7</sup> Priyantika Lesyaina Az Zahra, Aniatul Fukoroh, and Andi Rosa, 'Teori Double Movement Pada Penafsiran Fazlurrahman', *Jurnal Intelek Insan Cendikia* 1, no. 10 (December 2024): 7713, 10.

binti Mustafa Sa'dah, was also known as a devout woman.<sup>8</sup> From an early age, Wahbah showed a great interest in religious sciences. He began his primary education in his hometown, completing his *ibtidaiyah* studies in 1946. Afterward, he continued his education at the Sharia College of Damascus University, graduating in 1952 at the top of his class.<sup>9</sup>

Not content with his achievements, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili pursued further studies at Al-Azhar University in Egypt, a leading institution of Islamic education. There, he once again achieved outstanding success, graduating in 1956 as the top student. In addition, he obtained a diploma in teaching the Arabic language from Al-Azhar. After completing his education, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili began his teaching career at Damascus University in 1963. In 1975, he was appointed as a professor, delivering lectures in the Faculty of Sharia as well as the Faculty of Law. His expertise encompassed Islamic law, the philosophy of Islamic law, and comparative legal systems. Besides his work in Syria, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili also served as a visiting professor at various international universities. Between 1972 and 1974, he taught at the Faculty of Law at the University of Benghazi in Libya. Later, from 1984 to 1989, he taught at the Faculty of Sharia at United Arab Emirates University. He also gave lectures at the University of Khartoum in Sudan and the Islamic University of Riyadh.<sup>10</sup>

Wahbah Az-Zuhaili was raised in an environment of Hanafi scholars, which shaped his jurisprudential thinking within that school of thought. Although he adhered to the Hanafi *madhhab*, he was not fanatical and consistently respected the opinions of other schools. This is evident in his method of interpretation when discussing Quranic verses related to jurisprudence (*fiqh*).<sup>11</sup> Wahbah Az-Zuhaili's works are highly influential in the Islamic world. One of his monumental works

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<sup>8</sup> Mayuddin Siregar, 'Pemikiran Wahbah Az-Zuhaili Tentang Hukum Jual-Beli Urbun Ditinjau Dari Fiqh Muamalah' (Skripsi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim, 2017), 11, <https://doi.org/10.10.252520BAB%252520V%252520%2525281%252529.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Yayat Hidayatullah, 'Mahabbatullah dalam Alquran (Kajian Tafsir Al-munir Karya Wahbah Az-Zuhaili)' (Skripsi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin, 2018), 17, <http://repository.uinbanten.ac.id/3043/>.

<sup>10</sup> *Wikipedia*, 'Wahbah al-Zuhayli', 2 March 2025, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wahbah\\_al-Zuhayli&oldid=1278400419](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wahbah_al-Zuhayli&oldid=1278400419).

<sup>11</sup> Ghofur, *Mozaiik Musafir Al-Quran*, 136–37.

is *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, which discusses Islamic jurisprudence from various *madhhabs* with a deep and comparative approach. This work has become an essential reference for students and Muslim scholars worldwide. Additionally, Wahbah wrote a commentary on the Qur'an known as *Tafsir Al-Munir*. This exegesis is known for its thematic and easily understandable approach, helping many people to comprehend the contents of the Qur'an more profoundly.<sup>12</sup>

His dedication to education and writing earned Wahbah Az-Zuhaili the nickname "the Imam Suyuthi of the 20th century." This title was given due to his high productivity in writing and his significant contributions to the development of Islamic knowledge.<sup>13</sup> Wahbah Az-Zuhaili was also known as a moderate scholar who was open to contemporary developments. He often emphasized the importance of understanding the social context in the application of Islamic law, ensuring his teachings remained relevant to the needs of modern society.<sup>14</sup> Wahbah Az-Zuhaili passed away in Damascus on August 8, 2015, at the age of 83. Although he is gone, his scholarly legacy continues to live on through his works, which remain primary references in Islamic studies to this day.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Book: *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami wa Adillatuhu***

The book *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* is a monumental work in the field of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) written by Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, a prominent scholar from Syria. This book provides a comprehensive overview of Islamic law, covering various schools of thought (*madhhabs*) with a comparative and analytical approach. It consists of ten volumes that thoroughly discuss various aspects of Islamic law, from acts of worship (*ibadah*) to transactions (*muamalah*). Each topic is presented with references to its evidence from the Qur'an, Hadith, scholarly consensus (*ijma'*), and analogical reasoning

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<sup>12</sup> Anam, Khoirul, 'Warisan Syekh Wahbah Zuhaili', NU Online, Agustus 2015, <https://www.nu.or.id/internasional/warisan-syekh-wahbah-zuhaili-pQumC>.

<sup>13</sup> 'Syekh Wahbah Zuhaili: Ulama Produktif Abad 20 Berjuluk Imam Suyuthi', NU Online, accessed 10 March 2025, <https://www.nu.or.id/tokoh/syekh-wahbah-zuhaili-ulama-produktif-abad-20-berjuluk-imam-suyuthi-fmusg>.

<sup>14</sup> Zamakhsyari Abdul Majid and Mumun Mulyati, 'Problematisa Pendidikan Moderasi Dalam Pemikiran Wahbah Al-Zuhaili', *Almarhalah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (November 2022): 2, <https://doi.org/10.38153/almarhalah.v6i2.24>.

<sup>15</sup> Anam, Khoirul, 'Warisan Syekh Wahbah Zuhaili'.

(*qiyas*), giving the reader a clear understanding of the legal basis for each issue.

One of the main strengths of this book is its comparative method. Wahbah Az-Zuhaili not only explains the view of a single *madhhab* but also compares the opinions of the major schools in Islam, such as the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools. This allows the reader to understand the differences and similarities among them. Another key strength of the book is its process of *istinbath al-ahkam* (the derivation of legal rulings) from various sources of Islamic law. In discussing the rules of Sharia, the book always relies on authentic texts and evidence (*nash* and *dalil*).<sup>16</sup>

Wahbah Az-Zuhaili was motivated to write this book because he observed that the Muslim ummah, numbering in the billions and spread across more than fifty countries, was preoccupied with personal affairs. They were busy with their wealth, businesses, and individual work. Among them, some were engaged in projects to advance education and knowledge, but the theoretical and practical themes being taught often contradicted Islamic teachings. Consequently, it became difficult for an individual Muslim to find a correct understanding of Islam in the modern era due to a dualism of knowledge: general knowledge based on materialism and religious knowledge sourced from Islamic Sharia. Another contributing factor was the reality that Muslims were adopting foreign work methods in various fields and applying modern economic theories.<sup>17</sup>

Based on the reasons above, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili also emphasizes in his discussions the importance of social context and contemporary developments in the application of Islamic law. He demonstrates how the principles of Sharia can be applied in modern situations without sacrificing the essence of Islamic teachings. This book has been translated into various languages, including Turkish, Urdu, Malay, and Persian, indicating its widespread influence in the Muslim world. Several parts of the book have also been translated into English, allowing for broader access for non-Arabic readers. In Indonesia, the book is known by the title *Fiqh Islam wa Adillatuhu* and

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<sup>16</sup> Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami Wa Adillatuhu*, Jilid 1 (Beirut: Darul Fikri, 1989), 13–22.

<sup>17</sup> Az-Zuhaili, 23–24.

has become a primary reference for the study of *fiqh* in various Islamic educational institutions.<sup>18</sup>

### The Correlation Between the Earth's Movement and Prayer Times

The Earth's rotation from west to east causes all celestial bodies we observe, such as the sun, moon, and stars, to appear to move daily, rising in the eastern sky and setting in the western sky. This phenomenon occurs around the Earth's axis, an imaginary straight line connecting the two poles.<sup>19</sup> The daily journey of these celestial bodies follows circular paths that are parallel to the celestial equator. In the science of Islamic astronomy (*Ilmu Falak*), the orientation of the celestial sphere is divided into three types: First, the upright sphere (*langit yang tegak lurus*), which occurs at the equator, where the circular paths of the sun and all other celestial bodies are perpendicular to the horizon circle. Second, the oblique sphere (*langit yang miring*), which occurs in the regions between the equator and the poles, where the daily path of the sun is tilted relative to the horizon circle. Lastly, the parallel sphere (*langit yang sejajar*), which occurs in the polar regions, where the sun's daily path is parallel to the horizon circle.

In the upright sphere, the sun rises and sets on a path perpendicular to the horizon line, and at 12 noon, the sun reaches its highest point in the sky. The farther a place is from the equator, the more its celestial sphere is tilted, causing the sun to rise and set at an oblique angle to the horizon. This tilt increases with distance from the equator, and at 12 noon, the sun's position is lower in the sky. Finally, near the poles, the sun travels in a circle parallel to the horizon, and its altitude remains nearly constant throughout a single day. In an oblique sphere, the lengths of day and night are unequal throughout the year. During the summer, the days are very long, and the nights are very short. During the winter, the days are short, and the nights, conversely, are very long. This means that in the summer, the sun rises quickly but sets slowly, while in the winter, the sun rises slowly and sets quickly.

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<sup>18</sup> Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, *Fiqih Islam Wa Adillatuhu*, Jilid 1 (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2021), <http://archive.org/details/terjemah-fiqih-islam-wa-adillatuhu-mktbhazzaen>.

<sup>19</sup> Saadoeddin Djambek, *Shalat Dan Puasa Di Daerah Kutub* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, n.d.), 11.



With these changes in sunrise and sunset times, it is certain that prayer (*salat*) and fasting times will also experience significant shifts.

Changes in the Sun's declination also result in variations in the ratio between the length of day and night. Therefore, at any given location, the length of the day is not constant throughout the year; it can be longer or shorter at different times. Only for regions located directly on the equator is the length of the day always the same. For regions not on the equator, the length of the day varies throughout the year. The farther a region is from the equator, the greater the difference becomes. In extreme cases, a region may experience 24 hours of daylight, meaning no night at all, or conversely, 24 hours of night, with the sun never appearing.<sup>20</sup> Based on the explanation above, the author concludes that the world's regions can be classified according to their prayer times. This classification is as follows: First, regions with normal prayer times. Second, regions with normal prayer times but with narrow intervals between prayers. Third, regions where the signs for *Subuh* and *Isha* prayers are absent. Lastly, regions that experience periods without daylight (no *Zuhur*, *Asr*, and *Maghrib* prayers) or without night (no *Subuh*, *Maghrib*, and *Isha* prayers).

### **The Beginning of Prayer Times in Abnormal Regions: The Perspective of Wahbah Az-Zuhaili in *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu***

The Qur'an and Hadith serve as the foundation for acts of worship. In the context of prayer (*salat*), the command to pray is established in the Qur'an, while the specific timings for its performance are detailed in the Hadith. According to the hadith narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah concerning the beginning of prayer times, the determination of these times is based on natural phenomena, especially those related to the Sun. When there is a concern that natural conditions might be unreliable for knowing the prayer times (for instance, on an overcast day when the Sun is obscured), calculation formulas are necessary to assist Muslims. These formulas use data on the Sun's declination, which is caused by the Earth's movement (specifically its axial tilt). This phenomenon causes, among other things, the lengths of day and night to vary from one place to another. There are even regions that experience little to no daylight or nighttime during certain months of the year.

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<sup>20</sup> Abd Rachim, *Ilmu Falak* (Yogyakarta: Liberty, 1983), 16.

In the polar regions, for example, there are areas that experience days as long as 20 or even 24 hours, and some experience continuous daylight for weeks or months. During these periods, the sun circles the sky in paths nearly parallel to the horizon, without truly rising or setting. Conversely, there are also regions that, during certain months, never experience a sunrise, plunging the entire area into continuous, dark night. During that time, only the same stars are visible, endlessly circulating around the celestial pole, which is high in the sky near the zenith point. There are also regions where, in certain months, the red twilight (*syafaqul ahmar*) never disappears before the arrival of dawn (*Subuh*), making it impossible to distinguish between the twilight of dusk and the twilight of dawn. Additionally, some regions still experience a day-night cycle, but the duration of daylight is extremely short, or vice versa. This natural phenomenon is, in fact, alluded to in the words of Allah, specifically in Surah Ar-Rahman (55), Verse 17:

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ

“(He is the) Lord of the two sunrises and Lord of the two sunsets.”<sup>21</sup>

The variation in the lengths of day and night directly affects prayer times. For instance, in a region without night where the sun does not set, the times for *Maghrib*, *Isha*, and *Subuh* prayers are undefined. Conversely, in a region without daylight, the times for *Zuhur* and *Asr* prayers are undefined. The determination of the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions was explained by Wahbah Az-Zuhaili in his book *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, in Volume I. More precisely, it is found in the second chapter, “Salat,” under the subchapter “Prayer Times: Prayer Times According to the Sunnah,” in the final paragraph.<sup>22</sup> The author presents the following excerpt from the book:

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Qur'an Kemenag* (n.d.), Q.S. Ar-Rahman (55) Ayat 17, accessed 5 December 2024, <https://quran.kemenag.go.id/>.

<sup>22</sup> Az-Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami Wa Adillatuhu*, 664; Az-Zuhaili, *Fiqh Islam Wa Adillatuhu*, 551.

Figure 1. Wahbah Az-Zuhaili's Perspective in *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu* on the Determination of the Beginning of Prayer Times in Abnormal Regions

عَلَيْهِ قَالَ : « لَا تَزَالُ أَمْتِي بَخِيرٌ ، أَوْ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ مَا لَمْ يُؤْخَرُوا الْمَغْرِبَ ، حَتَّى تَشْتَبِكَ النُّجُومُ »<sup>(1)</sup> وَهُوَ يَدُلُّ عَلَى اسْتِحْبَابِ الْمُبَادَرَةِ بِصَلَاةِ الْمَغْرِبِ ، وَكَرَاهَةِ تَأْخِيرِهَا إِلَى اسْتِبْكَائِ النُّجُومِ .

وَقَدْ أَوْضَحَ الْفُقَهَاءُ بِنَاءً عَلَى ذَلِكَ وَقْتُ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ عَلَى النُّحُوءِ الْآتِي<sup>(2)</sup> ، وَأَجْمَعَ الْمَسْلُومُونَ عَلَى أَنَّ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسَ مُؤَقَّتَةٌ بِمَوَاقِيتٍ مَعْلُومَةٍ مَحْدُودَةٍ ، ثَبَّتَتْ فِي أَحَادِيثَ صَحَّاحٍ جَيِّدٍ ، وَتَجِبُ الصَّلَاةُ بِأَوَّلِ الْوَقْتِ وَجُوبًا مُوسَعًا إِلَى أَنْ يَبْقَى مِنَ الْوَقْتِ مَا يَسَعُهَا فَيُضَيِّقُ الْوَقْتُ حِينَئِذٍ . وَفِي الْمَنَاطِقِ الْقُطْبِيَّةِ وَنَحْوِهَا يَقْدُرُونَ الْأَوْقَاتَ بِحَسَبِ أَقْرَبِ الْبِلَادِ إِلَيْهِمْ .

وَفِي الْمَنَاطِقِ الْقُطْبِيَّةِ وَنَحْوِهَا يَقْدُرُونَ الْأَوْقَاتَ بِحَسَبِ أَقْرَبِ الْبِلَادِ إِلَيْهِمْ

*"For the polar regions and the like, their inhabitants should determine the times based on the nearest lands to them."*

Based on this passage, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, in his book *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*, advises that for regions experiencing special conditions related to prayer times, such as areas where the red twilight does not disappear (no signs for *Subuh* and *Isha*) or areas experiencing days without sunlight (no signs for *Zuhur*, *Asr*, and *Maghrib*) or without night (no signs for *Subuh*, *Maghrib*, and *Isha*), the natural signs for the start of prayer times are not visible. In such conditions, he explains that Muslims in those regions should follow the prayer times of the nearest region that still has normal prayer time indicators. An alternative is to follow the prayer schedule of a neighboring country that is close and still has a normal system of time changes. This approach is based on the principle of ease (*rukhsah*) in worship taught in Islam, allowing Muslims to fulfill their prayer obligations by following the most appropriate and feasible timings based on a nearby region with a normal day-night cycle.

Wahbah Az-Zuhaili does not recommend estimating prayer times as if the day were normal within the abnormal region itself. This aligns with his explanation that a prayer performed without certain knowledge (*yaqin*) or strong conjecture (*zhann*) based on juristic reasoning (*ijtihad*) is invalid. Therefore, whoever performs a prayer while being unaware that its time has begun, their prayer is not valid, even if it happens to be performed within the correct time. This is

because the act of worship must be performed with conviction and certainty. Consequently, if the start of a prayer time is doubtful, any prayer performed at that time is invalid, as doubt is contrary to firm conviction. This is supported by Surah An-Nisa (4), Verse 103:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۚ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا

*“...When you have completed the prayer, remember Allah standing, sitting, or [lying] on your sides. But when you become secure, re-establish [regular] prayer. Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.”<sup>23</sup>*

The meaning here is that prayer is an obligation with determined times, so one cannot merely guess when the time for prayer begins. Wahbah Az-Zuhaili's perspective is also in harmony with the majority opinion of other Hanafi scholars, as explained in the book *Al-Ma'yiir Al-Fiqhiyyah wa Al-Falakiyyah fi I'daadittaqowiir Al-Hijriyyah* by Nizar Mahmoud Qasseem. The majority of Hanafi scholars advise Muslims living in abnormal regions to follow the nearest region that still has normal signs for prayer times.<sup>24</sup> Historically, this similarity in opinion is logical, as Wahbah Az-Zuhaili was raised in an environment of Hanafi scholars, which shaped his jurisprudential thought, making it reasonable for his legal opinions to align with the Hanafi majority.<sup>25</sup>

Wahbah Az-Zuhaili's perspective on determining the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions is highly relevant when connected to the issues and needs of contemporary society in the era of globalization. In the modern era, Muslims are spread throughout the world. Many have chosen to settle in new lands, while others travel for leisure or work (*musaffir*), meaning Muslims are present in nearly every corner of the Earth. Muslims no longer reside only in tropical regions but also in subtropical and even near-polar (extreme) regions, where the lengths of day and night vary significantly.

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Qur'an Kemenag*, Q.S. An-Nisa (4) Ayat 103.

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad Najib and Dewi Chamidatul Chusna, 'Waktu Sholat Daerah Kutub Dalam Kitab Al-Ma'ayir Al-Fiqhiyyah Wa Al-Falakiyyah Fi I'dad At-Taqowiim Al-Hijriyyah: Problem Dan Solusinya', *MIYAH : Jurnal Studi Islam* 19, no. 01 (July 2023): 174–75, 01.

<sup>25</sup> Ghofur, *Mozaiik Musafir Al-Quran*, 136–37.

This temporal variance results in different prayer schedules across the globe, leading to the existence of abnormal regions where the red twilight does not disappear (no signs for *Subuh* and *Isha*) or where there are periods without daylight (no signs for *Zuhur*, *Asr*, and *Maghrib*) or without night (no signs for *Subuh*, *Maghrib*, and *Isha*). Wahbah Az-Zuhaili's perspective on determining the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions provides a clear answer to the challenges and needs of modern society. His opinion serves as a solution for Muslims living in or visiting abnormal regions and stands as a viable jurisprudential (*fiqh*) choice for the performance of the obligatory prayers.

## Conclusion

The Earth's movement causes the Sun's declination, which in turn impacts the duration of day and night across the world. In abnormal regions, the signs indicating the start of prayer times are often undefinable, thus necessitating a jurisprudential (*fiqh*) solution. One contemporary scholar, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, known for his moderate (*tawasuth*) thought, provides a solution for the determination of the beginning of prayer times in abnormal regions in his monumental book, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillatuhu*.

Wahbah Az-Zuhaili advises that Muslims in such regions should follow the prayer times of the nearest region that still possesses normal signs for prayer, or alternatively, adopt the prayer schedule of a neighboring country with a normal cycle of day and night. This perspective is based on the principle of ease (*rukhsah*) in worship.

He does not recommend estimating prayer times as if the day were normal within the abnormal region itself. According to him, a prayer performed without certain knowledge (*yaqin*) or strong conjecture (*zhann*) based on juristic reasoning (*ijtihad*) is invalid. Therefore, if someone prays without knowing for sure that the time has begun, their prayer is invalid even if it happens to fall within the correct time, because worship must be performed with conviction and certainty.

This perspective from Wahbah Az-Zuhaili aligns with the majority opinion of other Hanafi scholars. From a historical standpoint, this similarity is logical because he was raised in an environment of Hanafi scholars, which shaped his jurisprudential thinking. It is therefore reasonable that his opinion would be the same

as the Hanafi majority. This view provides a definitive answer to the challenges and needs of contemporary society in the era of globalization. His opinion serves as a solution for Muslims living in or visiting abnormal regions and stands as a viable jurisprudential (*fiqh*) choice for performing the obligatory prayers.

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