

### An Important Question Regarding the? Taraaweesh salaah

Q: Miss-8: We have a committee here that selects people to run the affairs of the Masaajid and Madrassahs. The Masjid committee is in charge of appointing teachers and Imaams. Although the members are mostly religious people, there are very few people of knowledge amongst them and most of them belong to the general public.

This committee also selects the Huffaadh who are to lead the Taraaweesh salaah. A notice is placed on the notice board, requesting all people interested in leading the Taraaweesh salaah to apply either-verbally or in writing to the committee. Neither during the application nor upon appointment is it ascertained whether the Haafidh is proficient in his recitation or not or whether he is able to recite with proper Tajweed. All that is seen is whether the Haafidh is capable of reciting the Qur'aan at speed so that he can complete as soon as possible. They care not whether the listeners hear nothing other than (YA?A LAMUN) and (TA?A LAMUN) and whether old and weak people are even able to proceed in Ruku and Sajdah quick enough.

They judge the Haafidh by the tone and melodiousness of his voice, caring not whether he recites with Tajweed or not. It is also seen whose son he is. The sons of the committee members and affluent people in the community therefore receive special preference.

The question is: Who is entitled to lead the Taraaweesh salaah? What type of Huffaadh should be selected? What are the conditions for the validity of the Qiraa'ah and the Taraaweesh salaah? Please clarify all of these factors so that the salaah and the important Taraaweesh salaah of thousands of Muslims can be recited.

Answer: It is the duty of the Ulema and Huffaadh to select people to lead the Taraaweesh salaah. It is a grave wrong and a sign of Qiyaamah for non- Ulema and non-Huffaadh to select Huffaadh to lead the Taraaweesh salaah without consulting the Ulema and Huffaadh.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi RAH. said, "Nowadays, every person is a translator and commentator of the Qur'aan and they all offer their opinions of the Shari'ah. as if understanding all the sciences associated with the Shari'ah is a simple affair. This is however, the laws ordained by Allaah. When it is only lawyers, barristers and high court judges who properly understand the laws made by people, why would it then be so easy to properly understand the laws of Allaah?

Performing the Taraaweesh salaah is Sunnah Mu'akkadah and completing the recitation of the Qur'aan in the Taraaweesh salaah is also Sunnah Completing it several times is even better. It is however necessary to complete the recitation with ease, calm and proper recitation. It is the manner in which we conduct ourselves that the future generations will also conduct themselves. If we complete the Taraaweesh salaah under duress, so will they and we will be held responsible for it.

It is vitally important to ensure that the letters of the Qur'aan are recited correctly because substituting letters (such as SEEN for SOD or a ZAA or a DHAA for a DHOD) constitutes a

major error. which often changes the meaning of the verse and thereby nullifies the salaah. When qualities of recitation such as Izhaar, Ikhfaa. Madd and Idghaam are neglected, the error may not be major, but it deprives the Musalli of many virtues of salaah. What greater deprivation can there be than failing to recite the Qur'aan with its etiquette and proper fervour during the month of Ramadhān?

Majaalisul Abraar states that rather than regarding the Taraaweesh salaah as an act of Ibaadah by which they may attain proximity to Allaah. it has become a mere habit for people. They perform salaah behind Imaams who do not perform the Ruku, Sajdah and other postures properly and do not recite the Qur'aan clearly as Allaah has ordained. In their rush, they omit words and letters. thereby committing grave errors.

Fataawaa Bazzaaziyyah makes it clear that reciting the Qur'aan incorrectly is Haraam by consensus of the scholars. Therefore, there will be no harm in a person leaving his Masjid to perform salaah in another Masjid when the Imaam of his Masjid recites the Qur'aan incorrectly. Rasulullaah SAW. stated that performing salaah behind an Aalim with Taqwa is like performing salaah behind one of the Ambiyaa ALY. However. people nowadays leave their Masaajid to find Masaajid where the Imaams recite the Qur'aan haphazardly and do not even perform their Ruku and Sajdah properly. In fact. such people even complain about Imaams who recite the Qur'aan properly and who perform the Ruku and Sajdah with the required calm and composure. Such people fall into the category of those people about whom the Qur'aan states that they treat their Deen as a toy, whom this worldly life has deceived and who are neglectful of the Aakhirah.

Exercising calm and composure when performing Ruku, Sajdah, Qaumah and Jalsah is essential in salaah. This means that these postures be carried out according to the Sunnah method with the body straightening out in Qaumah. with all the limbs settling in place before proceeding for Sajdah. Similarly, the body needs to be straightened out in Jalsah as well, with all the limbs settling in place before proceeding for the second Sajdah. The minimum duration of these postures needs to be the time taken to recite Subhaanallaah once. Whoever does not do this is liable for punishment in the Aakhirah because these acts are Fardh according to Imaam Abu Yusuf RAH. and Imaam Shaaf'r'ee RAH. Omitting these in salaah will render the salaah invalid in their opinion.

According to Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. and Imaam Muhammad RAH. these acts are Waajib, omitting which, the salaah will have to be repeated. According to another report from them, they are Sunnah, in which case one will stand accused for omitting them and will be deprived of Rasulullaah SAW. intercession. Such people will then be amongst those whose deeds in this world amount to naught whereas they assume that they are doing well. This is a great loss indeed.

At this juncture, it is necessary to highlight an important point, which someone willing to practice will easily accept. There is one Qaumah and one Jalsah in every Rakaah of the Taraaweesh salaah. Performing each of them with calm and composure is compulsory and omitting any of them is a sin. Therefore, omitting calm and composure in any one of them will earn one twenty sins (for each of the twenty Rakaahs). Omitting calm and composure in both the Qaumah and Jalsah of every Rakaah will amount to one earning forty sins. Furthermore, omitting the

Qaumah and Jalsah altogether will multiply the sins to eighty. When this is made apparent, the sin is doubled to a hundred and sixty. Failure to repeat the Rakaahs will cause the sins to be multiplied to a hundred and eighty.

In addition to this, omitting all of this will lead to a delay in the Adhkaar prescribed for the changes in posture. As a result, the Adhkaar will be recited after their prescribed time and also in the place where they ought not to be. This double error amounts to four Makrooh acts being committed in every Rakaah, which is tantamount to omitting four Sunnah acts in every Rakaah. This means that when the person who is not calm and composed performs the Qaumah, he will recite (SAMEE ALLAA HULIMAN HAMEED) and (ALLAAHU AKBAR) while still bending down for Sajdah, as a result of which, (ALLAAHU AKBAR) will be said only when he is in Sajdah. However, the Sunnah practice is to will recite (SAMEE ALLAAHULIMAN HAMEED) when raising the head from Ruku and (ALLAAHU AKBAR) while bending down for Sajdah.

When these Makrooh acts are added up, they amount to 160 and the Sunnah acts being omitted also add up to 160. Now can a person guilty of committing 160 Makrooh acts every night of Ramadhaan and omitting 160 Sunnah acts be regarded as a wise person? When every Sunnah act omitted deprives one of Rasulullaah SAW.'s intercession, will any wise person be content to omit so many? May Allaah never make us amongst the deprived ones. Aameen.

One should read this over and over to gauge whether these deficiencies are found in one's salaah. Thank Allaah if they are not and make amends if they are. This can however be rectified only when the Imaam leads the salaah in accordance with the Sunnah and when the Muqtadi is concerned about performing this great act of Ibaadah properly, regarding it to be a means of getting closer to Allaah. If some extra time is taken in the salaah, it must be viewed as time spend in the worship of Allaah.

Reading the Qur'aan speedily is in itself not wrong. The Qurraa have therefore classified recitation of the Qur'aan into three categories. The first is Tarteel, which entails reciting very slowly. The next is Tadweer, which is faster and the third is Hadar, which is the fastest of the three. However, the condition for recitation is that the letters are pronounced clearly.

May Allaah grant all the ability to understand the status of the Taraaweesh salaah and to correct all deficiencies prevalent in the manner it is being performed. Aameen. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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