

The Necessity to Avoid Deficiencies in the Taraaweesh salaah

Q: Salaah-603: Some Huffaadh recite Qur'aan so fast during the Taraaweesh salaah that despite standing close to them, one is unable to fathom what they are reciting. Will the Sunnah of completing the Qur'aan in Taraaweesh salaah be fulfilled in this manner?

Answer: The Taraaweesh salaah is Sunnah Mu'akkadah and completing the Qur'aan in the Taraaweesh salaah is also Sunnah Mu'akkadah. It is vitally important to ensure that the letters of the Qur'aan are recited correctly because substituting letters (such a (SEEN) for (SWOD) or (ZAA) or a (DHA) for a (DOD) constitutes a major error, which often changes the meaning of the verse and thereby nullifies the salaah. When qualities of recitation such as Izhaar, Ikht'aa, 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 Ramadhaan?

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.

An Imaam who recites so fast that the followers cannot fathom what he is reading is like someone not reciting at all. If he makes major errors in his recitation, not only is his salaah nullified, but that of all the followers. The Sunnah of completing the Qur'aan will therefore not be fulfilled. While it is the duty of the Imaam to ensure that all letters are pronounced properly, it is the duty of the followers to ensure that they employ an Imaam (in the Fardh and Taraaweesh salaah) who recites the Qur'aan properly. Because of their indifference, it is however the trend with people nowadays to perform the Taraaweesh salaah behind an Imaam who recites the fastest, regardless of how he recites the Qur'aan and regardless of how he omits all calm and composure when performing Ruku, Sajdah, Qaumah and Jalsah.

A verse of the Qur'aan states, "The Rasool SAW. will say, 'O my Rabb! Verily my people have ignored this Qur'aan.'" Commenting on this verse, the great Mufasssir Allaama Shabbier Ahmad Uthmaani RAH. writes that this includes not believing in the Qur'aan, not pondering over the meaning of the Qur'aan, not practising the injunctions of the Qur'aan, not reciting the Qur'aan, not paying heed to the correct recitation of the Qur'aan and also paying attention to less important things.

Ilmul Fiqh (Vol.2 Pg.190) states that reciting the Qur'aan improperly is Makrooh Tahreemi according to the consensus of the Ulema, so is recitation at a speed that no one can understand what is being recited.

Addressing the same issue, Fataawaa Daarul Uloom (Vol.4 P5.257) states that it is necessary to abstain from everything wrong in salaah, such as reciting the Qur'aan speedily and omitting composure, Ta'awwudh and Tasmiya. This is stated in Durrul Mukhtaar.

Majaalisul Abraar (Pg.190) states that there is no harm in a person leaving his own Masjid and performing salaah in another Masjid when the Imaam is one who frequently commits major errors in his Qiraa'ah. Such a Musalli will not be sinful for doing so because he intends performing salaah behind a person with Taqwa and 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 do 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. Refer to a previous Fatwa in Fatawaa Raheemiyyah for the details.

May Allaah grant all the ability to understand the status of the Taraaweeh 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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