

Completing the Qur'aan once during the Taraaweesh salaah

Q: Salaah-469: Is it Sunnah Mu'akkadah or Sunnah Ghayr Mu'akkadah the complete the Qur'aan once during the Taraaweesh salaah?

Answer: It is Sunnah Mu'akkadah and may not be omitted merely because of people's laziness. Completing the Qur'aan twice is better and thrice even better. Some Ulema have stated that if the people of a locality are so indifferent and lazy that completing the Qur'aan in Taraaweesh salaah would make them hold a bad opinion about the Deen, that much of Qur'aan should be recited that would ensure that the Masjid is not empty.

Although we know of no narrations stating that Rasulullaah SAW. completed the Qur'aan in the Taraaweesh salaah, there are narrations stating that Rasulullaah SAW. led the Sahabah RADI. in Taraaweesh salaah for a third of a night, half a night and even until the time of Sehri. See Abu Dawood (Vol.1 Pg.202), Tirmidhi, Nasa'ee and Ibn Maajah.

A Hadith states that when Rasulullaah SAW. once saw a group of Sahabah RADI. performing salaah in Jamaa'ah in a corner of the Masjid, he asked who they were. When informed that they were some Sahabah RADI. who did not know the Qur'aan (were not Huffaadh) and were following Hadhrat Ubay bin Ka'b RADI. in the Taraaweesh salaah, Rasulullaah SAW. commended their deed.³ This Hadith makes it apparent that the purpose of having a Haafidh lead the Taraaweesh salaah is to complete the Qur'aan. See Ta'leequl Mumajjad (Pg.111) for details of the reliability of the narrator of this Hadith.

The books of Ahadeeth also report that Hadhrat Umar RADI. appointed the fast readers to complete the Qur'aan three times during Ramadhaan. A recitation of the Qur'aan was then completed during every ten nights since the Ahadeeth also differentiate the three thirds of Ramadhaan (the first being days of mercy, the second being days of forgiveness and the third bearing freedom from Jahannam). The Huffaadh who recited the Qur'aan slower were charged with completing twice during Ramadhaan and those who read even slower completed once during Ramadhaan.

Hadhrat Umar RADI. would have never commissioned such a practice if he did not have some substantiation from the practice of Rasulullaah SAW. neither would the Sahabah RADI. have consented to it. If an act is not found in the life of Rasulullaah SAW. but in those of the Khulafaa Raashideen, such an act will also be regarded as being Sunnah. The famous book discussing the principles of Islaamic jurisprudence Usulush Shaashi (Pg.104) makes it clear that the Sunnah refers to that path of the Shari'ah that was trodden upon by Rasulullaah SAW. or his Sahabah RADI. Rasulullaah SAW. stated, "Hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my Khulafaa Raashideen."

Hadhrat Shah Wali'ullaah Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. stated, "The reality is that the Sunnah of the Khulafaa Raashideen is indeed the sunnah of Rasulullaah SAW. Mullaa Ali Qaari RAH. explains that when Rasulullaah SAW. said "Hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my Khulafaa

Raashideen", he indicated that the Khulafaa Raashideen would be following nothing else but his Sunnah and following them would be following him.

Referring to the twenty Rakaahs Taraaweesh salaah, the Muhaddith Allaama Anwar Shah Kashmeeri RAH. stated it is Sunnah Mu'akkadah because of the fact that Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of my Khulafaa Raashideen.

The gist of it all is that completing the Qur'aan in the Taraaweesh salaah is an emphasised Sunnah and a hallmark of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah, which the Rawaafidh are deprived of. It is also a great means of preserving the practice of memorising the Qur'aan, which may fade into extinction without it. It must therefore be guarded very covetously. The practice of completing the Qur'aan in the Taraaweesh salaah is one that has been preserved throughout time and which the Ulema of all the Madhaahib as well as all the Fuqahaa and Muhadditheen have encouraged. The fact that the Ulema are unanimous about it and that it has been a practice passed on from generation to generation is in itself a great proof to substantiate it. In fact, such emphasis on any deed may even render it Waajib (compulsory).

Some Fuqahaa are even of the opinion that the Taraaweesh salaah has been instated for the express purpose of completing the Qur'aan. The reason for having a Haafidh leading the Taraaweesh salaah in Jamaa'ah in every Masjid is for the public not to be deprived of the virtue of listening to the entire Qur'aan.

Imaam Abu Haneefah RAH. used to complete the Qur'aan once in the Taraaweesh salaah and would also complete a recitation once every day and once every night during Ramadhaan, making it a total of 61 completions during the month. Imaam Bukhaari RAH. also used to complete the Qur'aan once during the Taraaweesh salaah.

Umdatul Fiqh (Vol.2 Pg.368) states that it is Sunnah to complete the Qur'aan once in sequence during the Taraaweesh salaah and this practice may not be forsaken merely because people are lazy. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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