

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## تراویح Tarāwīḥ

THE RAMAḌĀN PRAYER

OWING TO OUR UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE NATURE OF Ramaḍān will be different this year. One huge change that we shall certainly miss out on is the intimate and close relationship we enjoy with the *masjids* in Ramaḍān. In Ramaḍān, *Masjids* are full for the five daily prayers, throughout the country and throughout the world. However, this year we will perform our prayers at home, like we have been doing so since the lockdown began.

Allāh-willing (إِنْ شَاءَ اللّٰهُ) we will also be performing *Ṣalāt al-Tarāwīḥ* at home this year, for all or at least part of the month.

### UNDERSTANDING ṢALĀT AL-TARĀWĪḤ

It is an additional prayer performed exclusively in the month of Ramaḍān, after the four *farḍ* (obligatory) units of ‘*Ishā*’ prayer. It consists of twenty units (*rak‘ah*), read in two units. It is considered a *sunna mu‘akkada* (emphasised *sunna*).

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ performed it throughout his life, and gave it huge emphasis. However, he did miss it on a handful occasions deliberately, for one reason: so that the prayer would not become *wājib* (necessary) upon the Muhammadan nation.<sup>1</sup>

### QUESTION—CAN IT BE READ AT HOME?

Yes, absolutely. Moreover, this is a *sunna*. In a hadith (prophetic tradition) recorded by Imam al-Bukhārī (d. 265H) and Imam Muslim (d. 261H), we are informed that the **Messenger of Allah** ﷺ came out in the month of Ramaḍān on certain nights. It was on three separate occasions; the third night, the fifth night and the twenty-seventh night. The Companions performed their prayer with him ﷺ. He would perform eight units with them, and they would perform the remaining units in their homes.

### QUESTION—CAN IT BE READ ALONE?

Yes, even though we have grown up reading this prayer in congregation. Again, thanks to the wisdom of our beloved **Prophet Muhammad** ﷺ, reading it alone is also a *sunna*.

### QUESTION—METHOD OF PERFORMANCE

- Tarāwīḥ prayer must be prayed after reading the ‘*Ishā*’ prayer, and before *Fajr* prayer begins.
- Perform the first part of ‘*Ishā*’ till the two *nafl* (“optional”) units (i.e. 4 *sunna*, 4 *farḍ*, 2 *sunna*, 2 *nafl*).
- Then read 20 units of *Tarāwīḥ*, as two-two units. For the intention, one shall intend two units *nafl*, for the

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī’s, *Talkhīṣ al-ḥabīr* (2:21).

sake of **Allāh**, *sunna mu'akkada*, following the *sunna* of **Prophet Muhammad** ﷺ, facing the *qibla*.

- After every four units, take a rest for *adhkār*, water and even a stretch. Remember that this is precisely what *Tarāwīḥ* means (to rest). Any *dhikr* (or prayer) shall suffice, though many recite the particular *tasbīḥ al-tarāwīḥ*.
- After completing the twenty recite a *du'ā* (“supplication”), asking **Allāh** to accept our prayers.
- Then read the *Witr* (a *wājib*) prayer and *nafl* prayer. If you read ‘*Ishā*’ in a congregation, *witr* may also be read in congregation. Otherwise read alone like one would normally do so.

#### ADDITIONAL MATTERS

- If there is no one who has committed the Qur’an to memory in the house (i.e. a *ḥāfiẓ*), do not worry. Recite what is easy for you from the Qur’an, even if you only know one *surah* (“chapter”) from it.
- Do not hold the *mushaf* (a copy of the Qur’an) during *ṣalāh*. This is not allowed according to the Ḥanafī legal school. The same applies to electronic devices, etc.
- Read *surahs* and verses in their order. Do not go backwards. So, if you read *Surah al-Quraysh* [the 106<sup>th</sup> *surah* of the Qur’an] in the first unit of prayer, do not then read any *surah* before this, but proceed to read any *surah* after 106 to 114.
- You cannot read a virtual *Tarāwīḥ*. In other words, you cannot listen to the Qur’an on a receiver (telephone, mobile, video, etc) and then follow it for *rukū’* and *sujūd*.

#### YOUR HEALTH—*Why Tarāwīḥ is so important*

In a month where Muslims are already required to fast for long periods of time, one might ask why **Allāh** has decreed a prolonged prayer in the form of *Ṣalāt al-Tarāwīḥ* during this month too. Apart from the obvious spiritual benefits, there are unbelievable health benefits too in performing these prayers.

- After *Iftār*, the blood glucose level continues to rise from the food taken in. Just before the *Iftār*, the blood glucose and insulin levels are at their lowest level. So *Tarāwīḥ* is instrumental (because of the light body movement) in ensuring balance once again.
- Eating considerably and then lying down (or not moving) is very harmful for the body. *Ṣalāt al-Tarāwīḥ* stops this from happening.

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