

صلاة التراويح ليست فريضة

Tarawīḥ Prayer is not Obligatory

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سلسلة إملاء الخاطر | Imlā al-Khāṭir Series



AL-SALAM
INSTITUTE

A Centre for Arabic and Islamic Sciences

Oxford . London . Online

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جميع الحقوق محفوظة

Imlā al-Khāṭir Series

In this series, which he names *Imlā al-Khāṭir* (literally, “dictation of thoughts”), Dr. Mohammad Akram Nadwi follows in the tradition of the Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn al-Jawzī’s *Ṣayd al-Khāṭir* and shares with the world his reflections on a variety of topics ranging from theology to law, history to heart softeners, philosophy, education and more. Composed in a casual, conversational style consisting of questions followed by their brief answers (each portion predicated by *qālū/qultu*, “they said”/“I responded”), he utilizes therein the highest level of Arabic, reflecting his love of the language and his extensive expertise in Arabic grammar and rhetoric. These short but poignant reflections are part of the *balāghah* genre and tradition of Arabic literature. It should be noted that these translations, done by his senior students, serve as a guide and can never fully match the style, tone and eloquence of the original Arabic. Also note that Dr. Akram does not necessarily review each translation and is not responsible for any errors, improper word choices, or the likes, that are an inevitable part of the translation process.

Dr. Mohammad Akram Nadwi

Dr. Mohammad Akram Nadwi is a world-renowned scholar of Indian origin who has resided in England for an extensive time. After receiving in-depth training to an advanced level in the traditional Islamic disciplines at the famous Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’ seminary in Lucknow, India, and receiving a PhD in Arabic literature from Lucknow University, he became a research fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, where he conducted research for a number of years on a variety of topics, including Ḥadīth and Sufi orders in India. He has published widely in Urdu, Persian, Arabic and English, including translations (like his work on Shāh Waliullah, *Bustan al-Muhaddithin*), editions of Arabic texts (such as a renowned critical edition of *Usul al-Shāshī* in Ḥanafī jurisprudence), and original monographs on Islamic law, female ḥadīth narrators and such figures as Abū Ḥanīfah and Sayyid Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwi. His groundbreaking work, yet to be published, is an encyclopedic 40-volume documentation of the legacy of female scholarship in the Islamic tradition. He co-founded the Al-Salam Institute in 2006 where he continues to serve as Principal and Senior Lecturer.

Introduction

In this monograph, Dr. Akram briefly discusses the Tarawīḥ prayer of Ramadan, which has unfortunately become a point of contention in many Muslim communities.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

صلاة التراويح ليست فريضة

بقلم: محمد أكرم الندوي

أو كسفورد

قالوا: قد ظهر قبلنا ناس ينكرون على من لم يحافظ على صلاة التراويح إنكاراً شديداً. قلت: هذا الإنكار غلو في دين الله تعالى وتشدد في غير محله، فارقوا بالناس متسامحين محبين إليهم الدين، وإياكم أن تشددوا في أمر من أموره مغالين فيه ومنفري الناس منه، فتلك سمة أهل الضلال الخوارج والمبتدعين.

قالوا: ما حكم صلاة التراويح؟ قلت: هي سنة مثل رواتب الليل والنهار.

قالوا: ما الغلو الذي أردت به؟ قلت: الغلو مجاوزة الحد، وهي أن تزيدوا على قدر الشيء كيفاً أو كماً، فمعاملة التطوع معاملة السنة، أو معاملة السنة كالفرض، أو وضع المباح موضع المكروه، والمكروه موضع الحرام، من الغلو في دين الله تعالى، وحث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم على السداد والمقاربة، ونهى عن الغلو، قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كما أخرج

البخاري: سدّدوا وقاربوا واغدوا و روحوا، وشيء من الدُّلجة، والقصد القصد تبلغوا. وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم كما أخرج النسائي وابن ماجه: يا أيها الناس! إيّاكم والغلو في الدين؛ فإنه أهلك من كان قبلكم الغلو في الدين. قالوا: ما دليلك على أن صلاة التراويح ليست بفريضة؟ قلت: إن الله لم يأمر بها في كتابه، ولم يأمر بها النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، وكلما سئل عن الصلوات المكتوبة اقتصر على الصلوات الخمس دون أي صلاة أخرى في الليل والنهار، بل ترك النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم المواظبة عليها مع الناس خشية أن تفرض عليهم، فقد أخرج الشيخان عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى في المسجد ذات ليلة فصلّى بصلاته أناس، ثم صلى في القابلة فكثرت الناس، ثم اجتمعوا من الثالثة أو الرابعة فلم يخرج إليهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فلما أصبح قال: "قد رأيت الذي صنعتم فلم يمنعني من الخروج إليكم إلا أنني خشيت أن تفرض عليكم". وقال الإمام النووي: "صلاة التراويح سنة ياجع العلماء. (المجموع 31/4).

قالوا: من الناس من يجادل غيره في عدد ركعاتها ويشدد فيها تشديدا. قلت: الذي أفضله أن التراويح عشرون ركعة (الدليل ليس هذا موضع بيانه)، ولكن لا بأس في الزيادة عليها والنقص منها، وقد ذهب العلماء قديما وحديثا إلى الترخص في الأمر، وأخرج البخاري عن عبد الله بن عمر رضي الله عنهما أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم سئل عن صلاة الليل ما ترى فيها؟ فقال: "صلاة الليل مثني، مثني فإذا خشى أحدكم الصبح صلى

واحدة فأوترت له ما صلى"، فبين النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنها مثنى مثنى، وأنها على نشاط المصلي والوقت المتوفر لديه. قال الإمام ابن تيمية: "والتراويح إن صلاها كمذهب أبي حنيفة، والشافعي، وأحمد عشرين ركعة، أو كمذهب مالك ستا وثلاثين، أو ثلاث عشرة، أو إحدى عشرة فقد أحسن، كما نص عليه الإمام أحمد لعدم التوقيف، فيكون تكثير الركعات وتقليلها بحسب طول القيام وقصره . (الاختيارات ص 64). وقال السيوطي: الذي وردت به الأحاديث الصحيحة والحسان الأمر بقيام رمضان والترغيب فيه من غير تخصيص بعدد، ولم يثبت أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى التراويح عشرين ركعة، وإنما صلى ليالي صلاة لم يذكر عددها، ثم تأخر في الليلة الرابعة خشية أن تفرض عليهم فيعجزوا عنها . وقال ابن حجر الهيتمي: لم يصح أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى التراويح عشرين ركعة، وما ورد أنه كان يصلي عشرين ركعة " فهو شديد الضعف . (الموسوعة الفقهية 27 / 142 - 145) .

قلت: المنكر الشنيع هو ما يفعله بعض الناس من السرعة العظيمة في القراءة، والركوع، والقيام بعد الركوع، والسجود، والجلسة بين السجدين، والتشهد، فليس همهم إلا العدد، وبذلك يتلاعبون بالقرآن، ويمهلون الطمأنينة، ومن يشك في حرمة، فليس مرمى هؤلاء الناس إلا سرد عدد الركعات، وقد غيروا المقصود و صرفوا الطاعة إلى شكل مجرد وصورة محضة، فالمقصود من صلاة التراويح هو القيام لله تعالى ذكر له ومرتلا كتابه

ومتدبرا آياته في خشوع وقنوت، وقد قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم للمسيء في صلاته: ارجع فصل فإنك لم تصل.

قالوا: فما توصينا؟ قلت: أوصيكم ونفسي بتقوى الله تعالى وتحبيب دينه إلى الناس في رفق وسإاحة، وإياكم الجدل في الدين والمرء فيه، أخرج الشيخان عن عائشة رضي الله عنها، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: إن أبغض الرجال إلى الله الألدُّ الحَصِم، وأخرج الترمذي وابن ماجه عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلوسلم: ماضل قوم بعد هدى كانوا عليه إلا أوتوا الجدل، ثم قرأ: ماضربوه لك إلا جدلا بلُّ هُم قَوْمٌ خَصْمُونَ.

Tarawīḥ Prayer is not Obligatory

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They said: Some people before us have condemned in very severe terms those who don't perform the Tarawīḥ¹ prayer.

I replied:

This condemnation is extremism in the religion of God and strictness where it doesn't belong. Rather, you should be gentle and forbearing with people and strive to make them love the religion. Be wary of becoming excessive and extreme in any of its matters, lest you drive people away, for that is a trait of the deviated Khārijite² sect and the innovators.

They asked: What then is the ruling of the Tarawīḥ prayer?

I replied:

It is sunnah³ like the rest of the sunnah prayers of the night and day.

They asked: What is the extremism that you allude to?

I replied:

Extremism (in Arabic, *ghuluww*) is to exceed a bound or limit, such as adding to the measure of a matter in any way: either in quality or quantity. So, to

¹ Tarawīḥ is the name of the special night prayer legislated in the month of Ramadan, usually involving the completion of the entire Qur'ān by the Imām in 8 or 20 units of congregational prayer.

² The Khawārij, or Khārijites, translated as "Secessionists," were the first sect of Muslims that split from the main body of Islām in the Caliphate of 'Alī. They were characterized by extremism, harshness and exhibiting violence towards fellow Muslims, among many other traits.

³ In the legal terminology of Islamic fiqh, sunnah refers to a religious practice or act of worship that is not obligatory but recommended, having precedence from the Prophetic practice.

treat an act that is supererogatory (nafl) as sunnah,⁴ or a sunnah as obligations, treating something permissible as detested,⁵ or detested as forbidden, are all examples of excess in religion. But the Prophet always encouraged us to do things properly and to try our best. He stated, as related by Bukhārī:

Therefore, do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately, and worship Allah in the forenoon and in the afternoon and during a part of the night, and always adopt a middle, moderate, regular course whereby you will reach your target (Paradise).

The Prophet also said, as related by al-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah: O people, be careful about excess in religion, for the people before you were destroyed by their excesses in religion.

They asked: What is your proof that the Tarawīḥ is not obligatory?

I replied:

God did not command it in the Qur'ān, nor did the Prophet ever order it. In fact, every single time he was asked about the prescribed prayers, he confined them to the five known prayers without adding to them a single other prayer of the night or day. Moreover, he stopped the practice of praying [Tarawīḥ] with the people for fear that it would become obligatory upon them. Bukhārī and Muslim relate from 'Ā'ishah that the Prophet once prayed in a night [of Ramadan] at the masjid, and the people began to follow him. The next day, even more people joined him. On the third or fourth night, they gathered for him but he did not come out that night. The next day, he informed them: I knew what you were doing, but the only thing that prevented me from coming out to you [to pray with you] was that I feared that it would become obligatory upon you.

⁴ In fiqh terminology, nafl refers to an optional act of worship that is at the discretion of the doer, while sunnah refers to an act that has additional religious sanction or recommendation, but still not obligatory. Generally, those things the Prophet practiced regularly becomes a sunnah in this scheme.

⁵ Permissible (mubāḥ) in fiqh is an entirely neutral act that carries neither reward nor punishment, while detested (makrūh) refers to those things that are discouraged or disliked in Islām without being strictly forbidden.

Imām Nawawī says: The Tarawīḥ prayer is sunnah by the consensus of the scholars [al-Majmū' 4/31].

They said: There are people that argue excessively about their number.

I replied:

The view that I prefer is that the Tarawīḥ prayer is 20 rak'ahs, or units (based upon proof that is not the subject here), but there is no problem with adding or subtracting from that number. Scholars, old and new, have allowed for concessions in this matter. Bukhārī relates from 'Abdullah b. 'Umar that the Prophet was asked about the prayer of the night and he responded, "The prayer of the night is two by two, and if any one you fears the dawn prayer at hand, then he should pray one rak'ah to close the prayer with Witr." So the Prophet clarified that they are two by two (i.e. in pairs), and dependent on the stamina of the one who is praying and the time available to him. Ibn Taymiyyah states:

If one prays the Tarawīḥ prayer according to the school of Abū Ḥanīfah, Shāfi'ī and Aḥmad as 20 rak'ahs, or 36 rak'ahs according to the school of Mālik, or 13, or 21, then that is all good, as Imām Aḥmad has clearly stated in a text narrated from him, for this is a matter that is not religiously mandated. Rather, the number of rak'ahs should correspond to the length of the standing. [Ikhtiyārāt, pg. 64]

Suyūṭī has said: What has been narrated by sound ḥadīth reports is the order to stand for the night of Ramadan, with great encouragement and without specifying the number. It has not been established that the Prophet prayed the Tarawīḥ prayer as 20 rak'ahs, but he prayed in the nights of Ramadan without a known number, and then stopped in the fourth night fearing that it would become obligatory and did not pray it again [in congregation]. Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī says: It has not been soundly established that the Prophet prayed 20 rak'ahs of Tarawīḥ, and the report that he prayed 20 rak'ahs is very weak. [al-Mawsū'ah al-Fiqhiyyah 27/142-145]

I also said:

A hideous evil is that which some people practice with their extremely fast recitation and extremely rapid motions of prayer, caring only for their

quantity. In that, they are playing with the Qur'ān and neglecting the tranquility of prayer. If anyone has doubts about the impermissibility of this, should know that the only goal of these people is to achieve the number of rak'ahs. They have changed the aims and converted obedience to its mere form and appearance. Rather, the aim of Tarawīḥ is to stand before God the Exalted, remembering Him and reciting His Book slowly and with deliberation, pondering over its verses in humility and devoutness. And as the Prophet has said to the one who made a mistake in his prayer: Return and pray for you have not really prayed!

They asked: What do you advise us?

I replied:

I remind myself and you to adopt the taqwā (consciousness) of God, to make the people love His religion with gentleness and forbearance, and to avoid quarrel and disputes about religion. Bukhārī and Muslim relate from 'Ā'ishah that the Prophet said: The most detested person to God is the ruthless, quarrelsome one.

Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah relate from Abū Umāmah that the Prophet said:

No people go astray after having followed right guidance, but those who indulge in disputes. Then he recited the Verse: "Nay! But they are a quarrelsome people." [43:58]