

Tarawih Prayer



It is written in the book Nur-ul-izah and in its explanation: It is sunnat-i muakkada for men and women to perform the tarawih, which consists of twenty rak'ats ^[1]. A person who disbelieves this is a heretic and his testimony is not to be accepted. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) performed eight rak'ats of the tarawih in jama'at (congregation) for several nights. [Thereafter he would go home and complete the set of twenty rak'ats]. It has also been reported by savants that when alone he performed twenty rak'ats of tarawih. [It consists of twenty rak'ats in all the four Madhhabs ^[2]].

The tarawih is performed after the last sunnat of night prayer and before the witr prayer. It is sunnat-i kifaya to perform the tarawih in jama'at. That is, when it is performed in jama'at in a mosque, others may perform it alone in their homes, which is not sinful. But in this case they will be deprived of the blessings of jama'at in the mosque.] If they perform it in jama'at with one or more people in their homes, they will earn twenty-seven times the blessings they would attain if they performed it alone.

To perform tarawih, they stand up for the following rak'at after making the salam at the end of every two rak'ats. Or they can give the salam at the end of every four rak'ats. They sit for a period equaling the time it takes to perform four rak'ats between every four rak'ats and they should recite the salawat or the tasbihat or the Qur'an-al-karim. Or they can sit silently. It is better to make the salam after every two rak'ats and to make the niyyat (intention) before each takbir of iftitah (beginning). Those who did not perform the night prayer in jama'at cannot perform the tarawih in jama'at. For the jama'at performing the tarawih have to be the same jama'at performing the fard. A person who did not perform the night prayer in jama'at can perform the fard alone and then join the jama'at who are performing the tarawih.

[1] Rak'at: In performing namaz, the actions of standing, bowing and putting the head on the ground twice are altogether called a rak'at. Most prayers of namaz consist of two or four rak'ats. One of them contains three rak'ats.

[2] madhhab: all of what a profound 'alim of (especially) Fiqh (usually one of the four-Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, Hanbali) or iman (one of the two, namely Ash-ari, Maturidi) communicated.