
Holding the Mus_haf during the Taraaweeh Prayer

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Article taken and slightly adapted from: followingthesunnah.wordpress.com

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allaah the most Kind the most Merciful

Question: What is the ruling of holding the Mus_haf by those who are praying the Taraaweeh prayer in Ramadaan with the proof that they are following the Imaam?

Shaykh al-'Uthaymeen (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)¹: Holding the Mus_haf for this aim is opposing the Sunnah and that is from different angles:

1. The person loses out on placing the right hand on the left while he is standing in prayer.
2. It leads to many movements for which there is no necessity from opening the Mus_haf, closing it and placing it under the armpit, in a pocket, etc.
3. In reality it busies a person praying with his movements.
4. The praying person loses out by not looking at the place of Sajdah; majority of the scholars hold the opinion that looking at the place of Sajdah is the Sunnah and is better.
5. The person holding the Mus_haf could perhaps forget that he is in the prayer if his heart is not attentive. Contrary to this if he has khushoo in his prayer, placing his right hand on his left, with his head bowing down towards the place of his Sajdah, then this would make him closer to being aware that he is praying and that he is behind the Imaam.

Question: The Noble Shaykh (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) was asked: What is the ruling of following the Imaam using a Mus_haf in the prayer?

Shaykh al-'Uthaymeen (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ): Following the Imaam by using a Mus_haf means that the praying person holds and reads a Mus_haf to follow the Imaam's recitation. If there is need for this, whereby the Imaam has a weak memory, and it is said to one of the people praying: 'Take a hold of the Mus_haf and prompt me if I make a mistake.' Then there is no problem in doing this since there is a need for it.

¹ (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

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As for it being in any other way; then I do not see it permissible for a person to follow the Imaam by reading the Mus_haf; since he loses out on what is required and falls in to that which is disliked. He loses out by not looking at the place of sajood, and also by placing the hands on the chest which is from the Sunnah. He falls into that which is disliked as a result of the movement of holding the Mus_haf, opening it, closing it, and placing it down, There is no need for all these movements.

The people of knowledge have said that it is Makrooh (disliked) to move in the prayer if there is not a need for it, because it negates the perfection of khusoo in the prayer. Some of the scholars even said that the movements of the eyes nullifies the prayer, because the eyes will follow the recitation from the beginning of the line to the end of the line, then from beginning of the second line to the end of the line, etc. Along with all this, there are many letters and many words, as such there would be a lot of movements for the eyes, and this nullifies the prayer.

So, my advice for my brothers is that they leave this matter and they return themselves to having khusoo without looking at the Mus_haf.”²

All Praise belongs to Allaah, may His peace and blessings be upon our final Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions and all those who follow his guidance.

² Taken from ‘Majmoo’ Fatawaa ash-Shaykh’ question 819.